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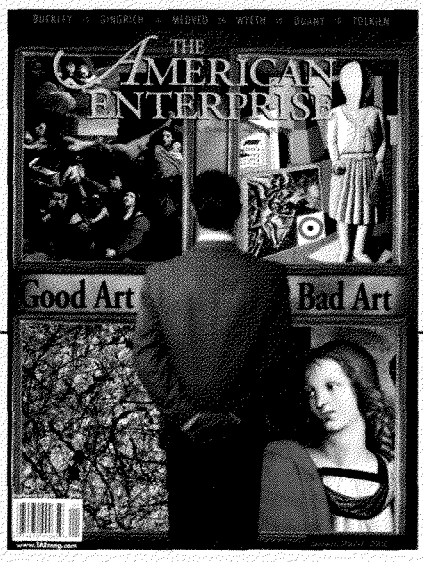

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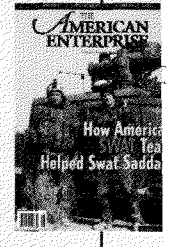

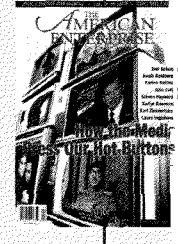

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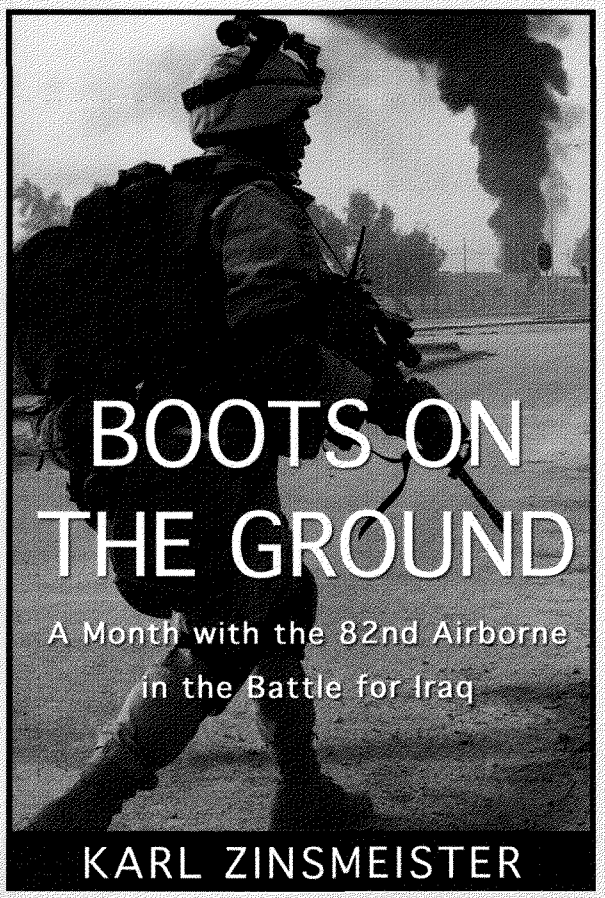

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POLITICS, BUSINESS, AND CULTURE

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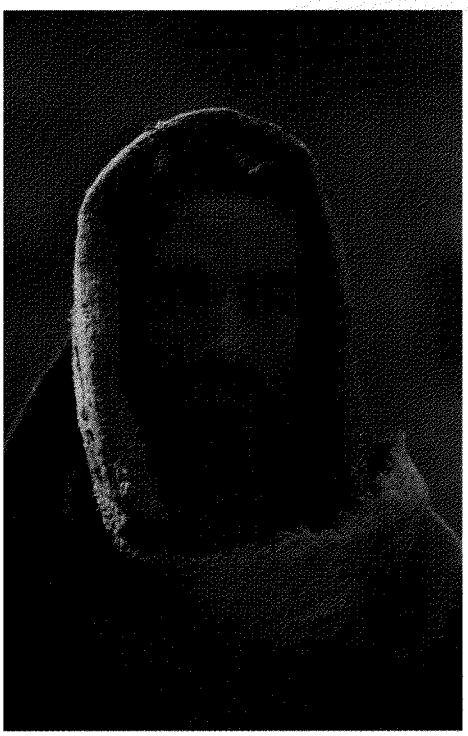

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Bird's Eye

The Power of One Person

By Karl Zinsmeister

If this issue of *The American Enterprise* has a unifying thread, it is the claim that individual people still have the ability to reshape history, to change the momentum of society, to make a difference in their own sphere and the larger world around them.

That was once something of a truism. But then a ragbag of theorists ranging from Karl Marx to Sigmund Freud to Richard Dawkins to the Tofflers convinced many modern observers that society is to a considerable degree on autopilot. It is mostly shaped, they insisted, by looming impersonal forces like economics or biology or technology. And where it is nudged by individuals, those individuals are acting primarily on deep, unintentional impulses like greed, insecurity, lust, or fear. The idea that a well-raised, sincere, and comparatively selfless man or woman might just set out to lead his or her people to a better position through competence, altruism, and will power is now considered…well…just very old-fashioned.

In fact, the whole idea that force of character, insight, and stamina can make some individuals "great" is now viewed as a little retrograde. Leaders? Yeah, sure. I think you meant to say "representatives of competing power structures," didn't you? What's the *real* agenda, comrade?

It all gives new meaning to the joke: Which common trait unites Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, and Christopher Columbus? They each happened to be born on a national holiday.

One truly wants to know: Is there something special about great men? What, if anything, do they share? How far do their qualities extend into the general population? In what sorts of permutations?

It's hard to study a figure like Thomas Jefferson without coming away a little intimidated. Forget about the President bit. Ignore his drafting of the Declaration of Independence in a few days without benefit of a board of technical consultants or a single Internet search ("inalienable" or "unalienable"?). Never mind the university he designed. Just in the course of everyday living, this was a man who could "calculate an eclipse, survey an estate, tie an artery, plan an edifice, try a cause, break a horse, dance a minuet, and play the violin," as one nineteenth-century biographer explained.

Of course those skills were just a few manifestations of Jefferson's greatness, not the source. The classic English view of good citizenship (from which Jefferson and the rest of us descend) is that the point of life is not to satisfy needs and wants, but to test ourselves against stiff challenges and see how we respond. Modern society has moved some distance away from this ideal of self-denying aspiration and struggle. But the impulse to climb high mountains just because they are there remains a powerful one among individuals who carve out great achievements.

Another quality found in most people who leave their mark is a potent internal source of direction and energy. They are independent, have clear views of right and wrong, trust in themselves, and have a crisp sense of what needs to be done. The confi-

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dence to persevere even when the course turns lonely is essential.

Mel Gibson is presently pouring himself into a new film, at great financial and critical risk, purely as a statement of his moral faith as a devout Catholic. Our essayists (don't miss the wonderful observations of Michael Medved and Daniel Lapin) suggest that Gibson is likely not only to survive the trial by fire he is now enduring, but to eventually reap great artistic and commercial rewards for his vision, doggedness, and courage.

Courage is actually a separate requirement of its own for most types of leadership. When Arnold Schwarzenegger leapt into the race for California's governorship, the conventional wisdom among both Democrats and Republicans was that Indian tribes running casinos were too politically powerful to cross, and too potentially helpful with lucrative campaign contributions to do without. He ignored that advice and called a spade a spade: Indian gambling is mushrooming out of control, producing unhealthy secondary effects, and free-riding on the rest of society, he told voters. (See page 36.) In the process Schwarzenegger became the very first prominent politician to take on what had been a sacred cow. Now that he has plowed open the road, many more timid souls will undoubtedly follow.

A fourth insignia of true leaders is that they are constructive in their efforts, rather than destructive. As Lyndon Johnson once put it: Any jackass can kick down a barn. It takes a master carpenter to erect one. In his intriguing feature article on page 26, Christopher DeMuth notes that this is part of the great appeal of ex-governors in our national Presidential races: As chief executives they have actually had to build things—budgets, programs, institutions, physical structures—while senators and other contenders from Congress have mostly just talked up or talked down other people's proposals for concrete action.

Is there something special about great leaders? What, if anything, do they share?

Great accomplishments are not just the province of presidents and governors and generals. In today's decentralized, meritocratic world, it is talented everyday men and women working in concert who increasingly win our major successes. "Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we stoop than when we soar," wrote William Wordsworth—and this is especially true in America, where the good sense and firm character of the massive middle of our society is far and away our greatest strength.

The American industrialist Andrew Carnegie proclaimed that if you removed his workers and left behind his world-beating factories, there would be grass growing in the cracks of their floors within six months. But if you took his factories and left his workers, in six months those men and women would have built new and better factories.

That is exactly the same conclusion I have come to regarding America's fighting forces. Discussions of our nation's war-fighting prowess often center on the computerized technologies and needle-nosed weapons we bring to the battlefield. But after close study, my view is that you could take all of our impressive equipment and technology, and every penny of the large sums we devote to our national defense, and give it to some other major nation, and they would not be able to create a force as effective as our current military—because they would not have the self-reliant, problem-solving, adapt-and-go American soldiers, sailors, pilots, and Marines that bring these weapons to bear with such independent competence. I flesh out this observation in my feature essay in the middle of this issue.

A final, paradoxical, aspect of greatness is that it is not necessarily built on dominating power. It is often the "softer" varieties of strength that are most important in achieving high ends. Biblical virtues like humility, altruism, and endurance in the face of suffering are often essential when leading a society into new territory.

There is a story of an angry conqueror addressing an unbending priest in his overrun village. "Don't you know I'm the one who can have you torn apart without batting an eye?" he threatened.

To which the priest replied, as a devout Christian: "Don't you know that I'm the one who can *be* torn apart without batting an eye?"

The Irish rebel leader Terence MacSwiney once wrote that "It is not those who can inflict the most but those who can suffer the most who will conquer." At the root of many successful political struggles, myriad breakthroughs in science, much great literature and art, and most successful military actions you will find a very simple, hard, humble, and stubborn quality: sacrificial endurance.

Being a successful leader of the sort we chronicle in this issue of *The American Enterprise* usually involves less flash, triumph, and acclaim than is often imagined. What separates successful from unsuccessful leaders, frequently, is simply their ability never to be crushed—to absorb disappointment, hurt, and failure, and turn these into something productive. That may be the highest test of a true chieftain.

This is what Victor Davis Hanson is getting at when he expounds, in his "Live with *TAE*" interview in this issue, on the "tragic" sense he admires in ancient Greek thinking. Even a fortunate life, he points out, will be studded with disappointments and disasters, because there are certain forces in the world "beyond the ability of men to correct." Strong individuals cope with these setbacks with moral sturdiness, patience, an understanding of the hardness of life, and a willingness to sacrifice immediate happiness to defend important long-term principles.

Those are qualities that have animated great warriors, governors, and prophets—as well as everyday citizens of remarkable nations—since the first crack of time. And they always will.

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Sidelights

By Brandon Bosworth

The left-wing London newspaper *The Guardian* hosted an online discussion on the topic "Is it time to assassinate George Dubya Bush?" ❧ A Baghdad couple named their newborn son **George Bush** as a sign of thanks for deposing **Saddam Hussein.** If they had had twin sons, the other boy would have been named **Tony Blair**, said **Nadia Jergis Mohammed** and **Abdul Kader Faris.** ··· According to a recent book by **Osama bin Laden**'s close associate **Yussuf al-Ayyeri**, it is not "the American war machine that should be of the utmost concern to Muslims. What threatens the future of Islam, in fact its very survival, is American democracy." The book, *The Future of Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula After the Fall of Baghdad*, was published by al-Qaeda. ❧ The Science Fiction Book Club is selling copies of **Al Franken**'s *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them.* ❧ Fifty-nine percent of Europeans think Israel is the biggest threat to world peace, according to an E.U. survey. ❧ A Gallup poll reveals that 25 percent of employers are less likely to hire someone who smokes. ❧ A Treasury Department investigation determined that IRS employees at tax help centers could answer taxpayer questions correctly only 57 percent of the time. ❧ The Census Bureau reported that nearly one in five U.S. residents speak a language other than English at home. ❧ There are now 1,800 Web sites dedicated to online gambling, up from 25 in 1997. ··· Americans will lose $3 billion on Internet gambling this year. ❧ German interior minister **Otto Schily** suggests the E.U. constitution should contain a reference to the influence of Islam on European civilization. ··· Seven nations are demanding a reference to Europe's Christian values in the E.U. constitution: Spain, Ireland, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. ❧ Judge **William White** of Escambia County, Florida now requires those convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol to attach a red and yellow bumper sticker to their car that reads: "How is my driving? Call Toll-Free 1-866-I- SAW-YOU. The Judge wants to know!!!"

Eleven top executives of the Direct Marketing Association—which represents telemarketers—have registered on the federal "Do Not Call" list. ❧ Holiday Inn offered amnesty to customers who have stolen hotel towels and now wish to return them. Around 500,000 $3 towels are stolen from Holiday Inns every year. ❧ California state senator **John Vasconcellos**, a San Jose Democrat, has threatened to leave office over **Arnold Schwarzenegger**'s election as governor: "If people want this actor to govern…they don't need or deserve me." ❧ Democratic Presidential contender **Dennis Kucinich** told a Cleveland audience that he was "running for President of the United States to enable the goddess of peace to encircle within her arms all the children of this country and all the children of the world." ❧ Sixty-eight percent of vegetarians have levels of vitamin B12 so low as to cause attention, mood, and concentration problems, according to a recent German study. ❧ Goldman Sachs projects that India will become the third-largest economy in the world—after China and the United States—by 2050. ❧ Japan saw a record number of suicides (7,940) related to job losses and bankruptcies in 2002. ❧ Household and small-business bankruptcies in Berlin rose by over 130 percent over the past year, states a German credit-reporting agency. ··· A poll by the British research company ICM revealed that seven out of ten German voters would reject the euro if given the chance. ❧ Forty-eight percent of U.S. blacks now prefer to be called "African American" according to a *Washington Post*/ABC News poll. That's a jump of 16 percentage points over last year. ❧ A chain of Canadian strip clubs is offering to pay college tuition for its strippers, as long as they maintain a "B" average. ❧ Since the U.S. Supreme Court ruled last year that it is un-Constitutional to execute the retarded, 10 percent of the nation's death row inmates have filed court papers claiming to be retarded.

❧

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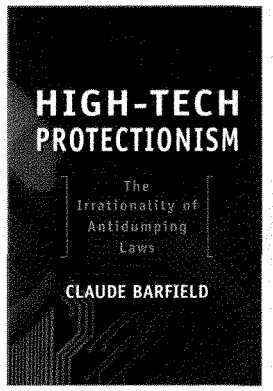

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Claude Barfield

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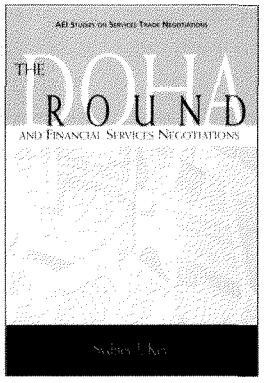

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Sydney J. Key

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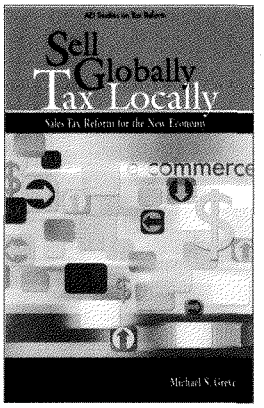

SELL GLOBALLY, TAX LOCALLY
Sales Tax Reform for the New Economy
Michael S. Greve

Should online purchases be taxed based on the buyer's location or the seller's? In *Sell Globally, Tax Locally,* Michael Greve offers a provocative new approach to Internet sales taxation. Drawing upon his extensive background in federalism issues, Greve argues that an origin-based tax system would break the "tax cartel" and replace it with competition—giving states a motive to lower their sales taxes as a means of enticing companies to choose their states as a base of operations.

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Scan

"I'm so confused—the investor in me wants things to get better, but the Democrat in me wants them to get a lot worse."

THE KHOMEINI OF FREEDOM

One cannot imagine an irony much thicker than Ayatollah Khomeini welcomed to Washington, yet that is precisely what happened. Hossein Khomeini, the 45-year-old grandson of the late Ayatollah Khomeini, recently addressed a packed audience at the American Enterprise Institute.

The younger Khomeini is also a cleric, and possesses the same stately forehead seen in the building-sized murals of his grandfather scowling at pedestrians on the streets of Tehran. The similarities disappear as soon as he speaks, though. He came to America with the message that his grandfather's revolution has been an abject political failure, that Iranians now wish to cast off their theocratic tyranny in favor of freedom and democracy, and that indeed they would like the help of the United States. Such thinking makes Hossein Khomeini every bit as revolutionary as his grandfather, albeit in a diametrically different direction.

In rapid-fire Farsi, Khomeini condemned Iran's past mistakes, and insisted that "liberation" should be the country's next project. The Iranian people have become "fatigued after 25 years of deprivation and suppression." Though they are making gradual strides toward greater liberty, Khomeini remarked, they may be too dispirited, and their theocratic government too oppressive, for them to succeed without help from the outside. Lest there be any confusion as to what this means, consider Khomeini's recent remark to Christopher Hitchens that it might be time to "bring in the 82nd Airborne."

A boiling point between the United States and Iran's theocracy might be reached in a number of ways, Khomeini suggested. Iranian clerics have been actively working to undermine U.S. interests in Iraq. He believes the August 29 assassination of popular moderate Shiite leader Ayatollah Hakim and 80 others in Najaf was done "at the behest of the Islamic Republic of Iran." Iran's nuclear program is another possible source of confrontation, though Khomeini indicated he had no specific knowledge of it. Given its "trouble-making" character, however, Iran's current regime will never cease striving for a nuclear weapon, he suggested. And Khomeini warned that the Tehran regime's revolutionary Islamic ideology continues to make it "one of the most active supporters of terrorism around the world."

Hossein Khomeini's life is a microcosm of Iran's recent experience. He supported the 1979 revolution with the hope it would bring greater democracy to Iran. But his grandfather's interpretation of Islam as an all-encompassing political force turned out to be incompatible with the civil and moral liberties on which democratic government is founded. Like communism and fascism, Islamism was incredibly successful at stirring up the hornet's nest of human passion, but failed dismally at translating such emotion into a decent form of government.

As this truth dawned on the younger Khomeini, he and thousands of other Iranian youths became enemies of his grandfather's regime. He began working to reconcile his faith with his aspirations for liberty in Iran. "A true Muslim is a Muslim who accepts religion freely," he declared to the crowd at AEI. "If everybody were supposed to become a Muslim, God himself would have turned everybody into Muslims." Such notions earned Khomeini exile from Iran, and near-assassination in Iraq, where he has currently settled in the Shiite holy city of Karbala.

Khomeini speaks of Islamism as a destructive longing for empty purity. His cure is a government built on "reason." It does not stretch the imagination to believe that Iran's dalliance with extreme Islamic government, which began with a Khomeini, could ultimately end with one, too.

—**Christian Brose** *is assistant managing editor at* The National Interest.

TIME FOR NEW ALLIES

This fall, U.S. leaders acted as model internationalists.

First, a U.N. Security Council resolution was passed in which all parties unanimously agreed that more international aid was needed to rectify the damage done to Iraq during the reign of Saddam Hussein. Then a conference with more than 70 countries convened in Madrid to raise the

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funds needed to put the former outlaw nation back on its feet. Putting America's money where its mouth is, the Bush administration and Congress led by example with an offer of $20 billion in direct assistance to the Iraqi people.

These U.S. efforts were conducted in the most gentle "multilateral" fashion. All the things the French and Germans are always lecturing America to do—rely more on diplomacy, share more aid, take less independent action—were done. So how was this received by our professed European allies? In far too many cases, with a curt "good luck" and turned backs.

Despite benefiting from the squashing of terrorism in the Middle East even more than the U.S. does (due to their proximity to the danger zone, and the large restive Muslim immigrant populations within their own borders) the French, Germans, Belgians, Russians, and company offered essentially nothing. France sent only a low-level delegation to Madrid and announced it would not be contributing to the rebuilding of Iraq. Russia likewise offered not a kopek. The European Union pledged $231 million. Recall that the E.U. has 100 million more people than the U.S., and a larger total economic output. Which makes its offer—1/86th of the U.S. contribution—look quite miserable. Germany agreed to only $50 million.

German development minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul stated that Germany "cannot afford" to offer any additional help to the Iraqis. She added that she was also against forgiving any of the $4.6 billion that Iraq owes to Germany—even though debt forgiveness would not require any budget outlays. And that debt, of course, was rung up during traffickings with Hussein which were highly profitable to German companies, but mostly useless to the Iraqi population.

Aid pledged in Madrid will not be touched by American administrators or troops, but will go into a trust managed by the World Bank, the U.N., and a committee of Iraqis. It will directly benefit Iraq's long-suffering people. It could help avert a radical turn by one of the Middle East's most important countries—which would be a disaster for all civilized nations. So there is no reasonable explanation for any Western ally's refusal to help today's Iraqis more substantially—except a desire to obstruct American aims in the region.

Proof that the failure of certain old European allies to do their part in rescuing Iraq is based on anti-U.S. obstructionism is simple: Just look at Afghanistan.

The Afghan war was not controversial in Old Europe. All of the allies agreed that the Taliban was a blight on central Asia, that the al-Qaeda cells sheltered and trained in that country presented a grave danger to the globe, and that there was an urgent need to remove both entities militarily, and to rebuild Afghanistan's government and civil society.

Yet the allies who were so glad to have America do the dirty work of rooting the Islamic fundamentalists out of their caves have not lived up to even their modest promises of financial support. The Europeans and other U.S. allies are far behind on their previous pledges of $4.5 billion for repair work in Afghanistan, and have provided hardly any recent aid to the Afghan people.

In a September conference in Dubai, the U.S. offered an additional $1.2 billion to stabilize Afghanistan. We hoped our allies would come close to matching that. The E.U., alas, put up about $49 million.

WHERE IS THE RELIGION OF PEACE?

Reverend Ian Sherwood, the chaplain who conducted a memorial on November 23 for the 30 people killed in the bombing of the British Consulate and a bank in Istanbul, stated after the service: "I'm appalled that I've not received any statements from a Muslim teacher anywhere in the world to express sorrow or reconciliation."

The U.S. must recognize some hard facts about some of our previous compatriots from the Cold War: They will only be obstacles in years ahead. Our unsuccessful attempts to shame our European brethren into doing their share in lifting up Iraq and Afghanistan make that clear.

FINE FRIENDS

The E.U. recently asked Europeans which countries they regard as posing a threat to world peace. In first place, selected by 59 percent of Europeans, was Israel. Second place was a three-way tie: North Korea, Iran, and…the U.S. (each picked by 53 percent of respondents).

In Britain, 55 percent said they regard the U.S. as a threat. Only in Germany and Italy did less than a majority regard the U.S. as a danger. Among the countries Europeans ranked as less menacing than the U.S. were Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, China, and Russia.

A different 2003 poll found that when asked to select "words most suitable to describe" the United States, significant numbers of Frenchmen chose terms like "inequality" (39 percent), "violence" (35 percent), "imperialism" (27 percent), and "racism" (23 percent).

KILLING WITH KINDNESS

Indigenous people in most developed nations get good press, more often than not portrayed as victims of colonizing cultures. Until recently, New Zealand's Maoris were no exception.

This changed when two prominent Maoris made headlines disputing the prevailing P.C. view. Operatic diva Kiri Te Kanawa said that her Maori people were often lazy. "I see too many living on benefits. When they come to Australia they are completely different, they actually have to work. But when they're in New Zealand… it just drives me crazy. I've known…a Maori who's been on a benefit for 37 years. Now what sort of pride is that?"

Perhaps Te Kanawa was emboldened

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KINDA MAKES YOU WISTFUL FOR PLANET OF THE APES, IV

To commemorate its 55th anniversary, the North Korean government recently hosted an eight-day film festival dedicated to the "immortal feats" of maximum leaders Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il. Among the cinematic gems: *The Leader Is the Great Father of Our People*; *Having the Great Brilliant Commander*; *The Fatherly Leader with the Working Class*; *Care Shown to Make Their Lives Shine*; and *The Birth of a New Government*, parts 1 and 2.

by John Tamihere, an associate minister for Maori Affairs in New Zealand's Labor government. In blunt language, he argued that "old Left" Social Services Minister Steve Maharey should "get away from statism" and reform New Zealand's welfare system. He echoed the fears of Sir Apirana Ngata, who long ago criticized the Labor government for introducing the welfare state, predicting it would destroy Maori initiative and create widespread dependence.

Though he is a cabinet member of a left-wing government, Tamihere essentially called for privatization of New Zealand's welfare system—on the grounds that it would be more beneficial to Maoris. Describing third and fourth generations of families on the dole, Tamihere expressed his shame at these statistics, and noted that a generation ago Maoris had one of the nation's highest rates of employment. Now they "walk around as a subculture of ethnically identifiable failures."

For this he put the blame on the Ministry of Social Development and its welfare schemes, which are based on charity rather than personal responsibility. Handouts "get you through until your next handout," but erode the recipient's self-worth. Tamihere suggested reforms built on "challenging the monopoly of the state in providing welfare." He also called for an end to lifetime housing entitlements. Instead, public housing should be available only in short-term "respite facilities."

Tamihere's proposals drew criticism from Prime Minister Helen Clark, who had his offending speech removed from the government's Web site.

With almost one third of New Zealand's children in households that depend on welfare, bold reform is long overdue. While less than 40,000 people were on welfare in New Zealand in the 1970s, there are 360,000 recipients today—nearly 10 percent of the population. About 300,000 of these people are able to work. Sadly, many Maoris are in this category.

Tamihere suggests that Maoris would be much better off if the law made it possible to redirect the effort and money poured into welfare to joint investment funds instead. "Print that," he challenged the press. And his voice echoed to the other side of the world.

—**Jane Mack-Cozzo,** *formerly a professor of American culture in Japan, is now a writer based in Southern California.*

RIGHT STUDENTS, WRONG PROFESSORS

A recent nationwide poll of college students conducted by the Harvard Institute of Politics found that many college students have rebelled against their baby boomer parents by shifting right.

Fully 88 percent of college undergraduates called themselves patriotic. And 61 percent said they approve of President Bush's job performance—at a time when approval among the population at large was 53 percent. At present, 31 percent of students call themselves Republicans; 27 percent, Democrats; and 42 percent, independent or other.

Meanwhile, yet another college has replicated *TAE*'s groundbreaking studies of the political loyalties of campus faculty. A ten-student group at Wells College in Aurora, New York visited boards of elections to compile party registrations and found that 92 percent of their professors were members of parties of the Left (Democrats, Greens, Working Families), while 8 percent were registered in parties of the Right (Republican or Conservative).

Wells professor Tom Vawter responded with an e-mail calling Republican students "stupid," and referring to their need for "lobotomies." Answered Wells student Kristy Hochenberger: "We are outraged. A conservative professor saying similar things would be gone. Liberal leaders would be flying into Aurora from around the country to support the beleaguered students and call for punishment of the professor."

IS PATRIOTISM NOW A REPUBLICAN THING?

Valerie Swiger, whose 21-year-old son Jason is serving in Iraq with the U.S. Army, tied yellow ribbons all around her town. Then she was told to take them down. Why? Some residents of South Portland, Maine complained to City Hall that the ribbons represent a personal political statement in support of President Bush and the war in Iraq.

"Every one of those ribbons represents a soldier to me," answered Mrs. Swiger. "It doesn't represent a Republican. It doesn't represent a Democrat." For now, she has won the fight: The City Council voted 4-3 in November to leave the ribbons alone.

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OOPS

From a letter sent to the editor of the New York Times *by AEI scholar John Lott:*

"How are things really going in Iraq?" (November 14) claimed that the annualized murder rate in Baghdad from April to October this year ranged from an incredible 100 to 185 per 100,000 people. The number was contrasted to the District of Columbia's murder rate in 2002 of 46 per 100,000 people. While the Baghdad 'murder' rate came from another *Times* article by Neil MacFarquhar (September 16), the authors ignore that MacFarquhar clearly stated that these deaths included 'automobile accidents' and cases where people 'were shot dead by American soldiers,' not just murders.

"More importantly, other figures do not paint such a dreary picture. For example, the U.S. Army 1st Division in Baghdad reports that the annualized murder rate in Baghdad in August was 16, not the 185 reported in the article."

LANGUAGE WARRIORS

You might almost think you were on the campus of some community college. But no ordinary college has mandatory urinalysis for drug use—one strike and you're out—or has a signpost reading "BAGHDAD 11,158 MILES," or all students in uniform. But the prime difference is the young faces. The ones here are more earnest than those generally seen on college campuses.

We're at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. It's the world's biggest language school, and it's run by the U.S. military. Thanks to the ripples of 9/11, it's getting even bigger. One sees new dormitories under construction across the campus, amidst young men and women shuttling to class or mandatory PT. They're unmistakably an intense group.

The DLI was born weeks before Pearl Harbor, when the Army started drafting Nisei to translate documents, eavesdrop on radio communications, and prepare to interrogate prisoners in case of war. After World War II, the DLI began training military linguists in Russian and other Eastern European languages, as well as Korean and Vietnamese. In the 1990s Serbo-Croatian was the most-taught language. Today it's Arabic, followed by the other tongues and dialects of the Muslim world like Farsi, Uzbek, Dari, Pashto, and Urdu.

And so you find 18- and 19-year-old American girls and boys from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines, volunteers all, working very hard ten or more hours daily. It takes 63 weeks to get a certificate of basic proficiency in Arabic—which (along with Mandarin and Korean) is ranked a "Category IV" language, meaning it is very hard. There are 750 civilian instructors teaching 2,500 students for the Department of Defense. Most DLI faculty are drawn from the vast stateside pool of immigrants representing most of the nations and linguistic groupings in the world.

Courses in history, geography, and culture are required in addition to language instruction, but none of the learning is for its own sake. There's a war on. And this training is all to help the U.S. military accomplish missions assigned by the Commander in Chief.

These bright kids could have succeeded in many fields. Asked by a visitor why they enlisted, they mentioned the challenge, the opportunity to help their country, and the prospect of learning valuable skills. One woman added that the more Arabic speakers deployed in places like Iraq, the smaller the risk of injury to soldiers and locals alike.

After these students graduate, some will proceed to Goodfellow Air Force Base in Texas to learn cryptology and eavesdropping. Others will proceed to Fort Huachuca in Arizona, the DoD interrogators' school. Once qualified, the students will function in a variety of locations, whether a high-flying reconnaissance aircraft or a brigade headquarters in Iraq.

In an interview, the commandant of the DLI, Colonel Michael Simone, was inclined to agree that the war against Middle Eastern extremism in all its permutations could go on a long time, maybe as long as the Cold War. Every few months his facility has a new intake of service members, and several post-9/11 classes have already graduated. He receives requests from the various military branches for a certain number of qualified linguists in such-and-such languages by particular date-certain. Thanks to professionalism of his students, the seriousness of his faculty, and his increased budget, he's generally able to deliver.

—**Edward Grossman** *has reported internationally for numerous newspapers.*

OINK!

Boston's not-yet-completed Central Artery project, popularly known as the "Big Dig," is the most expensive public works project in America's history, and also one of the vastest boondoggles ever. A legacy to his home state from late Speaker of the House (and premier porkmaster) Tip O'Neill, the project reroutes 7.5 miles of highway underneath central Boston.

Whereas 1986 forecasts projected that the Dig would cost $3.2 billion and be completed in 1998, costs have reached $15 billion, and the project is currently not scheduled to be finished until at least 2005.

One group has seen a bright side in all this. Outside one of the project's new tunnels, the National Pork Producers Council, authors of the advertising campaign for "the other white meat," have rented a highway billboard and posted the legend: "Ain't Pork Grand?"

—David Schaefer

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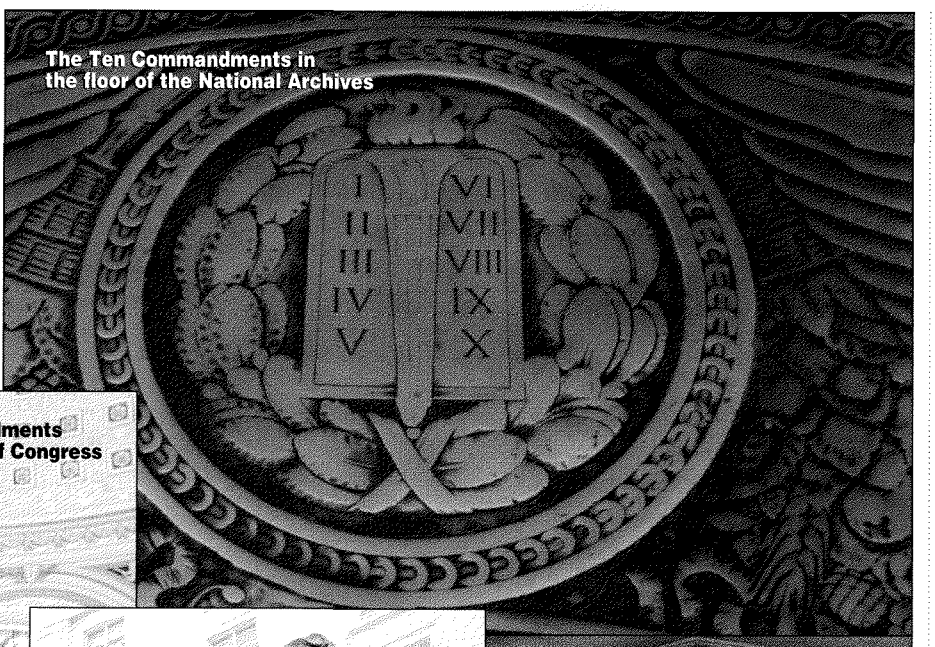
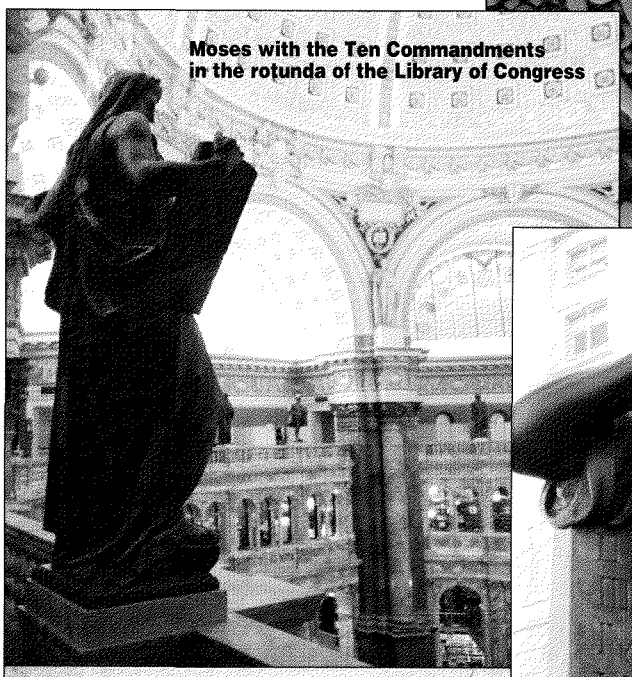
GOD IN GOVERNMENT!

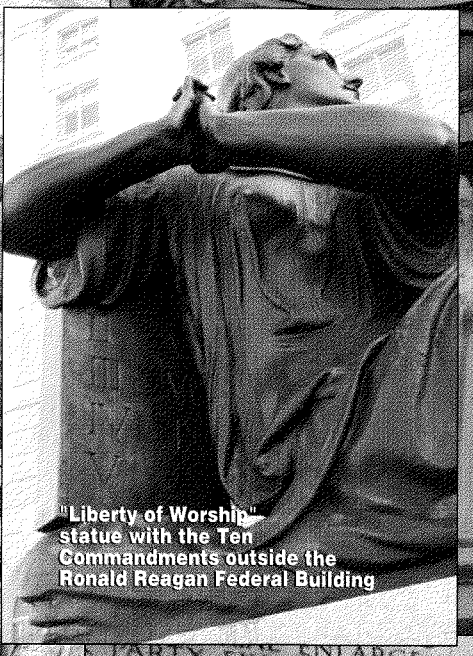
Photojournalist Carrie Devorah, an intern at *Human Events* (humaneventsonline.com), visited some of Washington, D.C.'s major federal buildings and documented the fact that our nation's seats of governance are rife with religious imagery. If references to God and images of the Ten Commandments are now said to be un-Constitutional, that is a very new view.



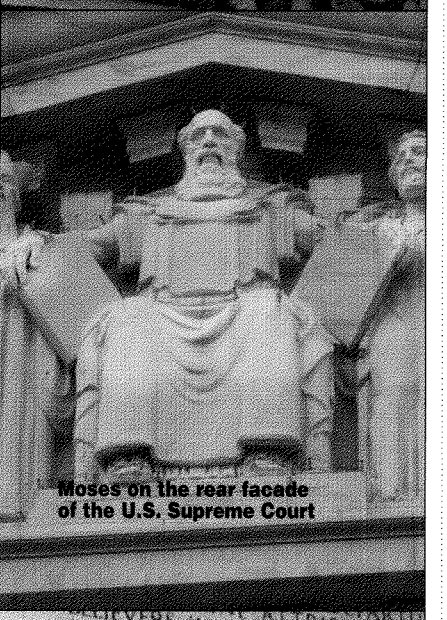
The Ten Commandments in the floor of the National Archives



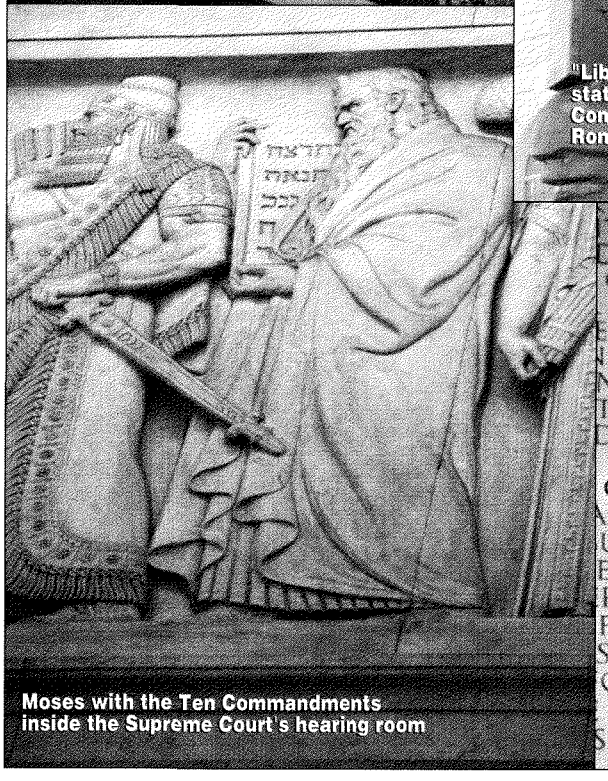
Moses with the Ten Commandments in the rotunda of the Library of Congress



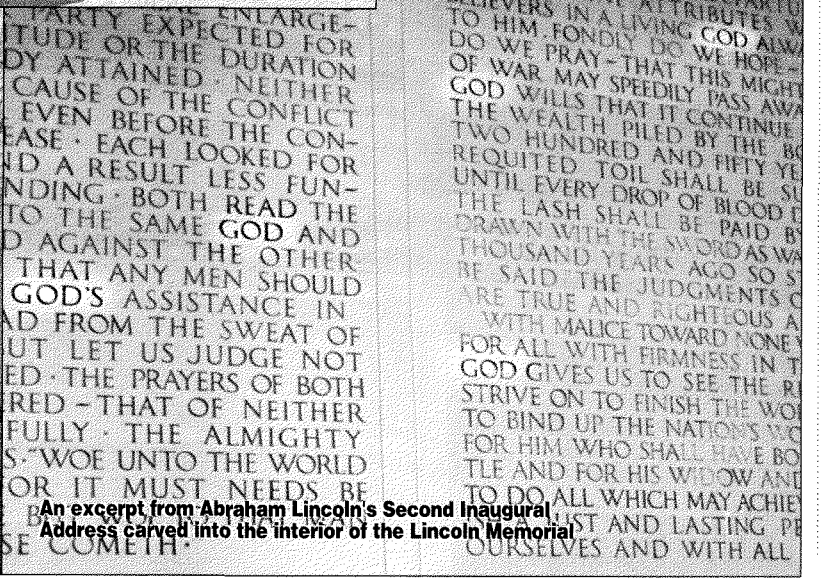
"Liberty of Worship" statue with the Ten Commandments outside the Ronald Reagan Federal Building



Moses on the rear facade of the U.S. Supreme Court



Moses with the Ten Commandments inside the Supreme Court's hearing room



An excerpt from Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address carved into the interior of the Lincoln Memorial

Carrie Devorah/Human Events Online

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By Karl Zinsmeister and Eli Lehrer

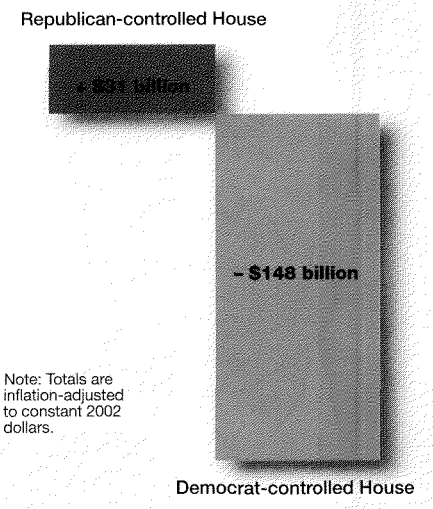
Indicators

DEFICITS AND DEMOCRATS

In his new book *The Bush Boom*, Jerry Bowyer describes the historical relationship between federal deficits and politics:

"The present-day Democratic Party has focused rhetorical attention on the dangers of deficits, and they are blaming the current President.... However, since the appropriations function of the federal government is clearly located with Congress—and with the House of Representatives in particular—the accompanying graph might be a better way to assign blame for deficits. There is no scientific way to directly attach deficits to political parties—as so many variables, over both short and long periods of time, can push a budget into deficit or surplus. But the data show that Democrats today have not earned the right to point the deficit finger at their rival party—and certainly not at the President."

Average annual deficit or surplus 1940–2002, by party



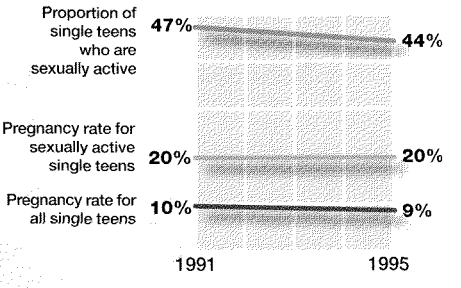
Source: U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

TEEN PREGNANCY SURPRISE

The 1990s saw teen pregnancy rates fall to their lowest levels in a generation. Conventional wisdom has credited increased contraception. A new study in the journal *Adolescent and Family Health*, however, shows that relatively little of the reduction in the pregnancy rate of unmarried teens can be attributed to contraception among the sexually active. Instead, fully two thirds of the drop was caused by higher levels of teenage sexual abstinence.

The authors looked not only at pregnancies, but also at birth rates among unwed teenagers, which actually increased among the sexually active. It's only because more teens were abstaining from sex altogether that there was a small reduction in overall teen births.

Sex and pregnancy among 15–19-year-old females



Source: Joanna Mohn, M.D.; Lynne Tingle, Ph.D.; Reginald Finger, M.D. "An Analysis of Causes of the Decline in Nonmarital Birth and Pregnancy Rates for Teens From 1991 to 1995," *Adolescent and Family Health*, Volume 3, 2003.

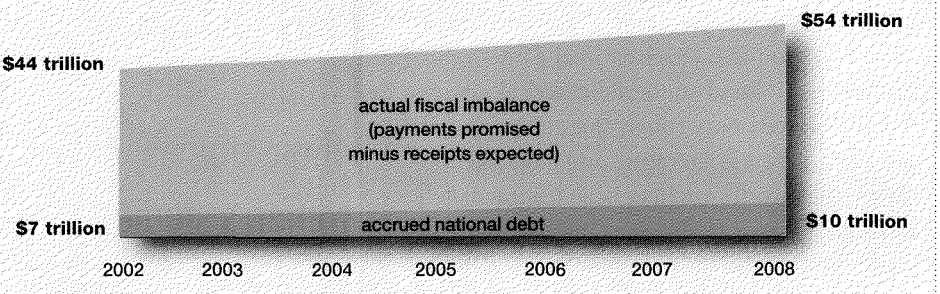
ENTITLEMENT BINGE

Two economists report that the growth of federal spending on "entitlements" like Social Security and Medicare is creating huge, hidden debt overhangs. Using a technique called generational accounting, AEI fellow Jagadeesh Gokhale and University of Pennsylvania professor Kent Smetters analyze the future costs of current spending programs. While our existing national debt figures reflect only past overspending, generational accounting calculates the costs that will pile up in the future through entitlement promises being made today. The bills for these promises will fall on the next generation of Americans, while the benefits go to people voting today.

According to the two scholars, about 80 percent of the generational imbalance stems from runaway Medicare expenses. Most of the rest comes from Social Security payments.

Generational accounting is a useful way of assessing entitlement reforms. It reveals that steps, which might increase short-term deficits (like creating private accounts within Social Security) nonetheless will significantly reduce the overall fiscal imbalance in these programs over the long haul.

The unsustainability of current federal entitlement spending



Note: 2002 debt figure is actual, others are estimated.
Source: *Fiscal and Generational Imbalances*, by Jagadeesh Gokhale and Kent Smetters, 2003.

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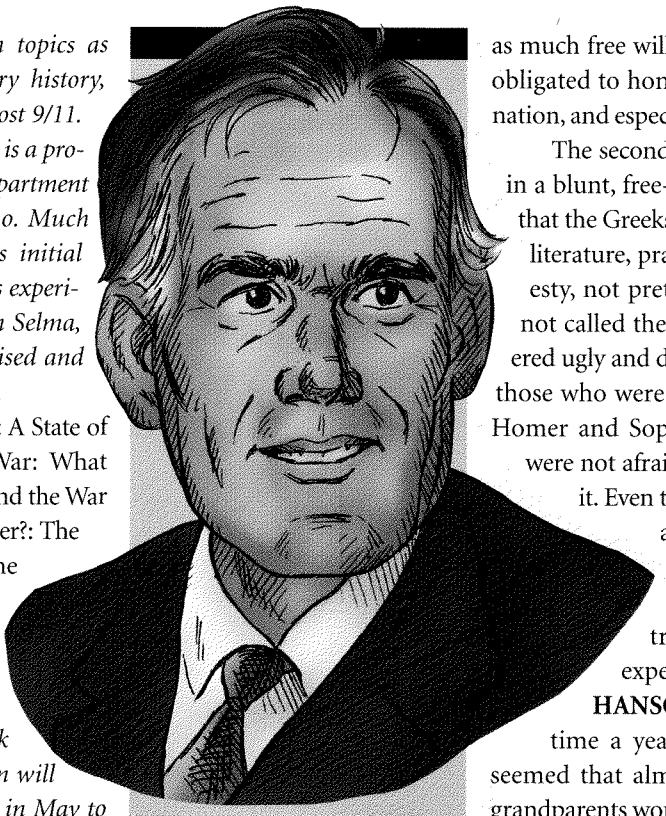
"Live" with TAE

Equally at home with ancient history and contemporary politics, a reader of Greek and Latin who exhibits a strong popular touch, a man with unusually deep roots and phenomenally broad interests, he's hardly your everyday academic.

Victor Davis Hanson



Victor Davis Hanson has written on topics as diverse as the ancient Greeks, military history, farming, immigration, and the world post 9/11. In addition to being a prolific author, he is a professor and co-founder of the Classics Department at California State University, Fresno. Much of Hanson's worldview, including his initial attraction to the classics, is rooted in his experience growing up on the family farm in Selma, California, where he was born and raised and still lives with his wife and three children.

Hanson's books include: Mexifornia: A State of Becoming (2003), An Autumn of War: What America Learned from September 11 and the War on Terrorism (2002), Who Killed Homer?: The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom (1998), *and* The Other Greeks: The Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Western Civilization (1995).

He is currently working on a book about the Peloponnesian Wars. Hanson will retire from his 20-year teaching career in May to become a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Professor Hanson was interviewed for TAE *by Los Angeles journalist David Isaac.*

TAE: What first aroused your interest in the classics? After all, you were a farm boy in Selma, California, taught in a largely Mexican-American public school system—not exactly the most likely background for such a career path.

HANSON: It was a wonderful practical schooling with some pretty rough characters, though not one steeped in literature and language. But there were two things in college I immediately appreciated as a freshman. One was that the Greek tragic sense of self resonated with a lot of the values I learned from farming: We all age. We all die. We all have responsibilities. We don't have as much free will as we imagine, because we are obligated to honor and protect our family, our nation, and especially the weaker among us.

The second thing was that I had grown up in a blunt, free-speaking family. And I noticed that the Greeks, contrary to modern American literature, practiced no self-censorship; honesty, not pretense, was valued. Old age was not called the "Golden Years." It was considered ugly and debilitating. People accepted that those who were weak would be beaten in war. Homer and Sophocles, Thucydides especially, were not afraid to describe reality as they saw it. Even then I noticed that freshness and appreciated it, even when I disagreed with it.

TAE: How did that Greek tragic sense grow out of your experience of farm life?

HANSON: Farmers only got paid one time a year: when the crop came in. It seemed that almost every year my parents or grandparents would say, "When we get the raisins in, we'll build this house, or buy that thing." Then something always happened. Either it rained, destroying the crop, or there was a labor shortage, or the price collapsed, or it would freeze in the spring, or somebody would get sick and die. And these disasters were beyond the ability of men to correct. I grew up with the idea that there are certain forces in the world that are beyond our control. You don't find such a tragic sense in our current world of professed utopian perfection.

TAE: Your book *Fields Without Dreams* describes your experience trying to make a go of it with your brothers on the farm even as the fruit market collapsed. You conclude that the small farmer is finished, yet also that the viability of our system of government may depend on the continuation of the small farm, which not only grows

I would eliminate any academic field of study that has "studies" in it: ethnic studies, women's studies, cultural studies, American studies.

Illustration by Sam Torode

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food but also excellent citizens. What values will we lose with the eclipse of the yeoman farmer?

HANSON: The small farm had one added dividend: it demanded that you work with nature to produce something good and necessary like food. Farmers weren't naive environmentalists, and they weren't rampant developers out to destroy nature either. They struck a balance.

So often in our society we don't have practical people involved in conservation. In fact we don't use that term very much anymore. We say "environmentalism" instead. I'm worried that environmentalism will increasingly become an academic enterprise, in which people don't see for themselves the consequences of their actions, suffer economically for their abstract agendas, or really participate daily in nature. Or if they do, it is for a weekend in the Sierras. A software engineer goes up to the mountains to hike, but he's not really one with nature.

TAE: What is the worst aspect of America's current farm system?

HANSON: Multibillion-dollar subsidies to corporate-sized farms. It's hypocritical that we preach free trade to the world and subsidize our own agriculture, even as our farmers claim to be individualistic and autonomous.

My family and I have never been subsidized. The government doesn't subsidize plums, peaches, celery, or carrots. I can't figure out why some farmers are supposed to make it without subsidies, but not others. Is cotton more vital than peaches, or honey than grapes? We'd be better off just to eliminate them all, and try to go back to a free market with government scrutiny of antitrust violation and distortions of the market.

TAE: After nine years devoted to classical studies, including a Ph.D., you threw it all overboard to go back to the farm in 1980. Why did you do it?

HANSON: I was young and impulsive, headstrong and idealistic. I was 26. For years I had been around many people for whom I had very little respect. My academic life was turning into a parlor game, with people from prep schools or elite academies arguing over the clothes some professor was wearing that day.

But the move was hard. People would drive by, see me pruning in the vineyards, and scoff, "There's that Hanson kid who has a Ph.D. from Stanford, pruning. That guy could have done something with his life."

Nearly every public issue today, whether illegal immigration or failing schools, boils down to an inability to speak the truth, to act on it, to believe in right and wrong, and use moral judgment.

TAE: As classics programs were crumbling elsewhere, it's remarkable that you were able to establish such a program from scratch at a place like Fresno in 1985. What were the arguments you encountered against it?

HANSON: "We don't need a rarified classics program. What are they going to do with it?" Some people added, "This guy is from Stanford. He thinks he's too good." Then those same people would turn around and say, "This guy is a bumpkin farmer from Selma who tracks in mud on the carpet." So I got it from both sides.

TAE: How did you set out to run the program?

HANSON: We tried to run this rarified program in as populist a manner as possible. We were at work five days a week. Students didn't have to make an appointment to see us. We ate lunch with them. We had them over to our houses. One kid used to park his motorcycle in my office all the time. We wore jeans and T-shirts. We were determined to make a program where students would feel familiar and wouldn't be put off—at the price, of course, of learning to read and write Latin and Greek and working extremely hard.

TAE: What is your idea of a perfect curriculum?

HANSON: My curriculum is old-fashioned. It's a zero sum game, and there are only so many disciplines that will always exist: literature, mathematics, biology, hard science, foreign language, politics, philosophy. To make space, I would eliminate anything that has the word "studies" in it: ethnic studies, women's studies, cultural studies, American studies. That would free up about 25 percent of the current therapeutic curriculum.

Most of the new things that universities are trying to introduce are not academic subjects. They're just popular culture dressed up as learning. Not only are these not university subjects, but they come at the expense of time diverted from real education. For every hour a kid is in a Chicano studies or environmental studies class, he's not learning history or philosophy.

TAE: What is the biggest problem in higher education in contemporary America?

HANSON: I don't know where to start. I guess it is really about the lack of accountability. Tuition rises faster than inflation. If you ask why nobody does anything about it, the answer is that with tenure and faculty governance there's no

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accountability. There's no accountability for administrators either. It's a fantasyland immune from the laws of American oversight and audit. I think that's coming to an end, because the people in charge are not doing a very good job. We can put up with the idea that universities are fat cats that overcharge Americans, but not when they also fail to educate kids. Americans are getting angry, and looking for new solutions.

TAE: You are critical of both leftist utopianism and laissez-faire capitalism.

HANSON: My criticism of corporate America isn't that it's evil or anything so silly as that. Indeed it provides us with affluence undreamed of in any earlier age. It's just that it's pretty unconservative. Whether it's rap music or two women kissing on prime time or the schlock of Mexican TV that increasingly dominates our airwaves here in California, it's usually not some left-wing conspirator who's behind it, but rather a big corporation making money by appealing to the lowest common denominator, without regard to cultural consequence or any effort to uplift. The arbiter of values is always profit. They don't realize that they can be a very radical, revolutionary force.

TAE: In your recent book, *Mexifornia*, you argue that our goal should not be a multicultural nation but a multiracial nation with one culture. Could you elaborate?

HANSON: I was getting frustrated with this term everyone used: "multicultural." The very affluent, mostly white, liberal people who use it don't actually want the police in their neighborhood to have the culture of Mexican officers. They don't want to be treated with the same medical protocols that prevail in China. They don't want their daughters to have clitorectomies as in Sudan. So what do they mean with this idea of a salad bowl of culture?

What they really mean is they want a core culture that is Western, enhanced by exotica on the periphery, such as fashion, food, literature, and movies. That's a very different concept from multiculturalism. What we have to agree on is one culture, one language, one notion of what the law is, respect for private property, faith in democracy, capitalism, a transparent society, free speech. And those things are pretty much confined to those countries that are Western or Western-inspired.

TAE: You trace U.S. military power to the Greek traditions of discipline, rationalism, free inquiry, dissent, etc., and say that free citizens are history's deadliest fighters. I'm going to give you a list of some recent changes in Western attitudes and technology and ask you whether you think they'll have a significant impact on our ability to wage war in the future.

If autocratic societies take just our science without embracing our other institutions, then the innovations of freedom can be turned against us.

First is our unwillingness to sustain significant casualties.

HANSON: It's been the mantra of modern society, whether it's Mogadishu or the war against Milosevic, that a prime reality of American military operations is we can't take casualties. And I'm not sure I agree. It's more that we can't stand casualties in something that's not immediately relevant to our national interests. This is a country that bled in Vietnam and is risking thousands in Iraq. We are a tough people.

I know lots of people are becoming skeptical about the war in Iraq, but I haven't heard any mainstream person say, "Let's leave the country." And I don't think they will—even though an American or two may be killed every other day for some time.

TAE: A second change is increasingly restrictive, self-imposed rules of engagement. To take just one example, our unwillingness to eliminate Iraqi forces fleeing at the end of the first Gulf War—because it would have been too much like a cruel turkey shoot.

HANSON: I'm very worried about that. It's hard for an affluent Westerner to see that people in battle are not simply victims. Lots of Iraqi soldiers, for example, were only too happy to rape and plunder their neighbors. On the "Highway of Death," perhaps 500-600 killed soldiers were magnified by broadcast television imagery into thousands dead. We ceased bombing, and we felt good. Unfortunately, a few weeks later we saw pictures of whole hillsides of Kurdish children out in the snow, starving to death, or heaped corpses of Shiites—victimized by those very soldiers who were allowed to flee Kuwait and re-form into the nucleus of an army that butchered the innocent.

We saw the irony of misplaced clemency again in the latest Iraq war. Our moral inability to destroy the enemy core outright, the assumption being that the Baathists were simply pawns used by Saddam Hussein, meant that a lot of them were able to throw off their uniforms and start killing Americans and innocent Iraqis as irregulars.

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There's this terrible paradox in war: The degree of post-bellum tranquility is usually directly related to the degree to which the enemy has been defeated, even humiliated, and suffered punishment. That's what eliminates bellicosity. But in postmodern society we don't want to inflict punishment on the enemy. So there's no reason the enemy necessarily feels he's been defeated. Thus he goes on doing terrible things after you've ceased shooting at him.

TAE: Change three is the acquisition of powerful weapons based on Western science by people lacking Western scruples against misusing them.

HANSON: We don't stay up all night worrying about weapons of mass destruction in the hands of the French, because they also have Western institutions of democracy and civic audit and courts and elections that monitor the use of these weapons. But there are parasitic societies who want to cherry-pick Western culture, taking the innovations that lend us power, while rejecting the freedoms that produce those innovations and administer their application. If these societies—especially tribal or autocratic ones—take just our science without embracing our other institutions, then the innovations of freedom can be turned against us.

At that point the only thing that prevents the use of these weapons by our enemies is our own vigilance and deterrence. But how do you deter somebody who wants to blow himself up? So it's something we have to worry about.

One defense is to remember that terrorists don't work in a vacuum. Every terrorist group has to have money, institutional backing, some physical sanctuary. They have to have land inside some country. And those countries and institutions that provide land and capital to terrorists must be treated as synonymous with terrorists. Then deterrence can work, once we make it clear that we can be even more ferocious and unpredictable in a just cause than they can be in a cruel one.

TAE: What about the loss of cultural conviction in the West, the growth of an attitude that we in the West are the worst problem, often fostered in our universities? How can this stand against the deep, if rash, conviction of Muslim fundamentalists?

HANSON: It's a sort of curse of Western civilization that because it produces so much largesse through capitalism and private property, and such a high degree of freedom through constitutional government, that we sometimes become skeptical, cynical, almost consuming ourselves out of boredom or smugness rather than cherishing and protecting our freedom and material security. Complacency descending into decadence has always been a danger to the West, whether it's Petronius' *Satyricon*, the antics of an eighteenth-century French court, or France and Germany from 1925-30. How do you inculcate values of community, hard work, sacrifice, and a tragic view of nature when you can sit down and have a latte and biscotti any time you want?

Most liberal societies fail when they're unable to transmit their values from one generation to the next. It's not because of poverty, but due to wealth; not hardship, but leisure.

We fight this using education, using family, using religion. But when we lose government as a tool to inculcate discipline and hard work, and lose the universities as an inculcator of strong values—indeed, when they become part of the problem—then we're stuck with only the family and church. That's what the cultural divide is about right now. The family and the church are on one side, and government, the intelligentsia, and the media are on the other.

TAE: Given that Iraq lacks all the traditions you identify as underpinnings for consensual democracy, what are the chances that the U.S. will succeed in its effort to transform Iraq into a democracy that will serve as an example for similar transformations in the region?

HANSON: We have a 75 percent chance if we persevere. Iraq does have natural wealth. So we won't have to deal with famines or want if consensuality comes. And Iraq has the full attention of the United States right now. Almost every issue that Americans are concerned about at present—the European relationship, the United Nations, the next Presidential election, the war on terrorism, the future of the Middle East—they've all settled on Iraq. So if we lose, we lose a great, great deal. And if we win, to the victors go even greater rewards.

We have so much at stake. I think most Americans realize that if we were to withdraw from Iraq and allow it to be Lebanonized, or to allow another Saddam Hussein, then the repercussions would be absolutely catastrophic. And there is no nuclear-tipped superpower backing the Baathist insurgents, limiting what we can do in the region. If we find that Iran or Syria are importing RPGs or terrorist cells, we can take them out if need be.

TAE: How do you see Iraq 10 years from now?

HANSON: I think it'll be something like Turkey.

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I think it'll be a primarily Islamic country that will have a multiparty system. It will probably be closer politically to Europe than it is to us, but it won't be a receptacle of plots to assassinate U.S. Presidents, attack foreigners, or commit genocide. And in the Middle East that's saying a lot.

TAE: You've argued that the truism that democracies don't war against other democracies has not really been historically true, and will not necessarily hold true in the future. Where do you think the greatest threat now lies?

HANSON: I'm worried about Europe. Its democracies are becoming increasingly undemocratic. The E.U. is growing statist and totalitarian without an opposition, and I don't quite buy the idea that Europe is demographically enervated. Remember, Europe is the embryo of the Western military tradition. If a continent that has more people and greater GDP than the United States were to be run by 80,000-90,000 bureaucrats without oversight, then watch out.

TAE: Could you see the E.U. becoming a totalitarian entity with a strong military?

HANSON: Not now. I'm talking 30 or 40 years. The E.U. has no bicameral legislature. It has no independent judiciary that can overturn the administrators. It's very adverse to local referenda by the people. I just don't see an institutionalized check on the power of the utopians at the center, who don't believe in consensus or rebuke.

It's a very elitist system. All the Europeans I talk to start out on the left, but within three minutes or one drink they're attacking the United States from the right. Whether it's our fashion, our food, our music, or our movies, they say we are corrupting European standards of taste. The lower classes create the popular culture in this country. That's frightening to many Europeans, though it's also radically democratic, which is supposed to be the dream of every French *philosophe* as he sips coffee after a hard day on the barricades.

TAE: You say dissent is important for democracy. You note the importance of Greek dissent before the Battle of Salamis. But are there times when dissent can be deadly?

HANSON: Self-critique has always been a burden. The Roman Republic struggled with a lack of support back home. It's a price that we pay in the West for our openness. The dividends are a variety of voices and ideas and proposals that enhance our strength and war-waging ability. The downside is if we allow our efforts to be subverted by the voices of a few who have a preconceived idea that something's wrong. I'm very worried about that at present. I can't pick up a newspaper and read anything positive about Iraq, even though I think it's the revolutionary event of our times, and is bringing great good to the world.

I can't pick up a newspaper and read anything positive about Iraq, even though it's the revolutionary event of our times, and is bringing great good to the world.

TAE: Which figure from the ancient world does President Bush most remind you of?

HANSON: He reminds me of a sort of modern-day Epaminondas, who got it into his head that the way to stop attacks on Thebes was not just to fight back near Thebes (although he did that very well), but go to the heart of darkness and free the helots. George W. Bush got it into his head that the way to defeat these people who've been killing us for 20 years—recently on the *USS Cole*, on September 11, at the first World Trade Center attack, and on and on—was not to simply swat them, but to go right into their countries and destroy the conditions that created these fanatics.

But, then again, after Epaminondas freed 250,000 slaves, the Thebans put him on trial for his life.

TAE: French President Chirac?

HANSON: He reminds me of an array of petty fourth-century B.C. Greek leaders: Aeschines, for example. He was a post-classical Greek statesman who had no power, but a large imagination and ample nostalgia for things of the past. A man who had no military, but wanted to be respected precisely on grounds of power. A man who lived in a tiny, shrinking country, but had visions of global grandeur.

TAE: French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin?

HANSON: He reminds me of someone out of the *Satyricon*…yes, a Eumolpus. He's a perfect Eumolpus. There are so many layers of his comical absurdity beyond the hair. He's a bad poet, a bad biographer of Napoleon, he lives in a fantasy world of French power, and he's duplicitous. And he's vain—a fraction of the person of a Colin Powell or Donald Rumsfeld. Very sad. A bad literary figure who can't distinguish the moral difference between a Jefferson and a Napoleon.

But he's also a frightening figure as well, because he's symbolic of the post-World War II generation in Europe. In some deep, deep way these French ex-radicals had to account for the fact that their army, the largest in Europe, crum-

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bled in six weeks to the Germans and then was saved by unsophisticated Americans. I don't think you can understand French cynicism, postmodernism, everybody from Sartre to Foucault, without understanding such a wound. They had to create alternate fantasies to account for the fact that their nation just fell over in the Ardennes. DeGaulle was the original personification of the malady; de Villepin is a poor epigone.

TAE: Why did Tocqueville call religion the most valuable legacy that aristocracy bequeathed to democratic countries?

HANSON: I think that was originally a classical notion. A lot of classical rationalists, even the sophists, and especially people like the historian Thucydides, understood that religion could provide a very valuable social force, a break or buffer against man's appetites.

TAE: Civilizations come to an end. Do you think, given the threats to the Greek values underpinning our Western civilization, that ours may be coming to an end?

HANSON: Most liberal societies fail when they're unable to transmit their values from one generation to the next. It's not because of poverty, but due to wealth; not hardship, but leisure. It tells me something that everyone in America is talking about this crisis of faith and spirit right now. We worry there's something wrong with America, something wrong in us, morally. We don't want to be a bankrupt generation who, instead of fearing, rightly, our fathers, now fears our children much more.

Nearly every public issue today, whether illegal immigration or failing schools, boils down to an inability to speak the truth, to act on it, to believe in right and wrong, and use moral judgment. So we have figured out the problem. But how do we of the comfortable suburb go back to the hard work and discipline of the past that are essential to the tragic view? That will be a key problem for the next generation. Are we going to leave children behind that are as sturdy as our parents were?

What saves us for the moment is that this country is such a wonderful, powerful, rich society that it can run on the fumes of greatness for probably another century. But I'm not sure it can be quite like it was unless we wake up now and rediscover what this country was all about at its founding.

If the European Union—with more people and greater GDP than the U.S.—ends up being run by 90,000 bureaucrats without oversight, then watch out.

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days after Arnold's inauguration, that they would seek an initiative for the November 2004 ballot. The proposed measure, which will need more than a million signatures to qualify, would give the tribes 90 days to renegotiate with the governor. The tribes would retain their monopoly on gaming if they agree to pay 25 percent of their net revenues to the state. If they don't, the card rooms and race tracks would be allowed to have up to 30,000 slot machines, for which they would pay 35 percent, about $1 billion a year. Schwarzenegger stated that he neither supported nor opposed the initiative.

Observers on both sides marveled at the shrewdness of the proposal. If it makes the ballot, the people, not the governor, would be holding a gun to the Indians' heads. Indian publicist Nikki Symington is among the skeptical. "Public opinion be what it may," she says, "the Indians have the law on their side, and short of seeking legislation in Congress, there's nothing he can do." That, ultimately, is where many believe this is all headed—a reconsideration of tribal sovereignty by the United States Congress.

Opponents of Indian gambling fall into two philosophical camps. Some seek incremental mitigation of negative impacts. Others seek an end to tribal sovereignty, which they say is an un-American concept. Cheryl Schmit believes Congress may eventually be forced to redefine "sovereignty" or do away with it altogether. "I think it will happen," she says, "but it will take a Constitutional amendment, and that could be a 20-year process. During that time, I'm not willing to give up all the other issues we can address through local agreements."

The possibility of losing their golden sovereignty is the final reason why the Indians may deal with Schwarzenegger. One Indian commentator is already fatalistic: "I predict that casinos will cause Indians to lose our tribal status," wrote Native American columnist David Yeagley last summer. "Casinos will cause Indians to lose our reservations. Casinos will destroy Indians. The American people will call for the government to eliminate the reservations completely. Laws will ensue. It's only a matter of time."

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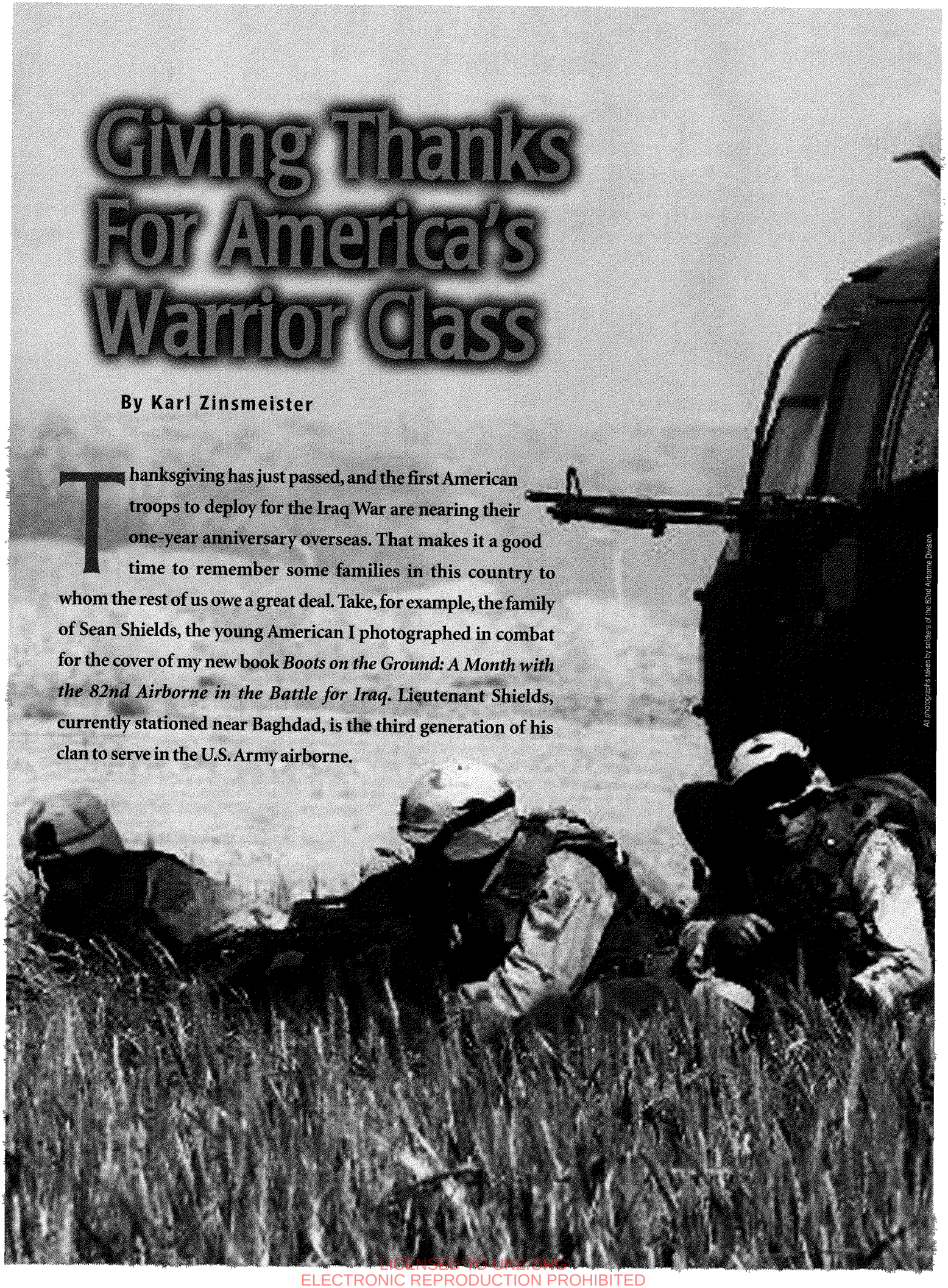
Giving Thanks For America's Warrior Class

By Karl Zinsmeister



All photographs taken by soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division.

Thanksgiving has just passed, and the first American troops to deploy for the Iraq War are nearing their one-year anniversary overseas. That makes it a good time to remember some families in this country to whom the rest of us owe a great deal. Take, for example, the family of Sean Shields, the young American I photographed in combat for the cover of my new book *Boots on the Ground: A Month with the 82nd Airborne in the Battle for Iraq*. Lieutenant Shields, currently stationed near Baghdad, is the third generation of his clan to serve in the U.S. Army airborne.

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Sean's grandfather was one of the men who created the stellar reputation of the 82nd Airborne Division in the first place—parachuting into the critical battles of Normandy and Nijmegen during World War II, and fighting with distinction at the Battle of the Bulge. In his nighttime jump into Normandy (no night-vision goggles in those days), the elder Shields' parachute hooked on the steeple of a stone church; he slammed into the side of the building and was knocked out cold. When he came to, he cut himself free from his parachute harness, fell heavily to the ground, and in the pitch black promptly stumbled into a foxhole of German soldiers, losing his rifle in the process. So his introduction to Normandy began with a knife fight, which he won.

These are the worst men imaginable to have as military enemies, and the very best to surrender to.

Sean's father served in Gulf War I, eventually retiring as a colonel. Now Sean is an Army Ranger doing his part of the dirty work in Iraq. He has shaken off two roadside bombings of his humvee within a month, and soldiers on without complaint. There are many such families in this country with a multigenerational tradition of military service.

There are also lots of families who are oblivious to this tradition. In his recent book *Keeping Faith*, Frank Schaefer describes how, after he'd sent other children to New York University and Georgetown, his affluent Boston neighbors expressed disappointment at his son's decision to become a Marine. "He's so bright and talented and could do anything!" blurted one man. "What a waste!" A similar view is betrayed by *New York Times* reporter Chris Hedges when he describes today's soldiers as "poor kids from Mississippi or Alabama or Texas who could not get a decent job or health insurance and joined the Army because it was all we offered them." Or even more harshly by Columbia University professor Hamid Dabashi, who told some war protestors not long ago that they were "'A' students, who think for themselves," in contrast to the "'C' students with their stupid fingers on the trigger."

Are such impressions accurate? From my experiences observing and writing about American soldiers—most recently as an embedded reporter during last spring's Iraq war—my answer is an emphatic "no." Such representations of America's fighting men and women, I suggest, are misunderstandings of scandalous proportion.

Many Americans do not fully appreciate what a wide and talented range of people currently serve in our military. There are suburbanites, hillbillies, kids from concrete canyons, and farm boys in our fighting forces. I met graduates of tony schools like Wesleyan and Cornell in Iraq, not only in the officers corps, but right in the ranks. I met disciplined immigrants from Colombia, Russia, Panama, and other places. Our battlefield computers, helicopters, and radars are kept humming by flocks of mechanical whizzes and high-tech aces.

I know of a man who was most of the way through a Ph.D. at Fordham University when, looking for a more active and patriotic career, he decided he'd like to start jumping out of perfectly good airplanes with the 82nd Airborne. He came in not as an officer but as a private. When I met him four years later, he was a highly competent sergeant.

I know of the son of an engineer and a nursing supervisor who had glided through his school's gifted-student program after being accelerated a grade above his age group, then landed a good job as an open-heart-surgery technician. But then the September 11 attacks convinced him his country needed him for more important work. He is now a medic in the 82nd Airborne, hoping for an eventual career as an Army doctor.

I shared a tent with a soldier who, after suddenly breaking into fluent Spanish, explained that he had picked up his language facility while serving as a missionary in South America for three years before joining the Army. This mature and worldly individual was just a rank-and-file paratrooper.

Another entry-level soldier from California I got to know was, if I had to guess, probably not a stellar book learner. But after just a few minutes of conversation I could tell he had a quick native intelligence, and he was a classic American autodidact. He had trained himself in German, thinking it might aid his aspiration to enter the Special Forces, and was now studying battlefield medicine on his own time. Envisioning some sort of advanced first aid, I discovered to my surprise that in the latest week he had taught himself how to do emergency tracheotomies.

A military translator I met had recently finished learning one of the world's hardest languages—Mandarin—when the Army, noting his obvious linguistic facility, told him they needed Arabic speakers. So he went right back to school to learn one of the planet's *other* hardest languages. This man's intellectual skills would make him a success in any number of fields, but he has chosen to serve his country as a well-armed multilingual sergeant. "Don't ask," he replied wearily when I asked him what language he dreams in.

A few years ago, I interviewed General John Abizaid, now America's top military officer in the Middle East. He had entered West Point in 1969, and noted that at that time the academy had to accept every minimally qualified applicant just to fill his class. Today, by contrast, there are scores of young Americans competing for each open slot; entry into our military academies is now as prized as admission to an Ivy League school. That, it seems to me, is a nice indicator of how support for the military has rebounded in this country since our Vietnam-era lows—and it hints at the high quality of the individuals who are now flowing into our armed forces at all levels.

Karl Zinsmeister is TAE*'s editor in chief.*

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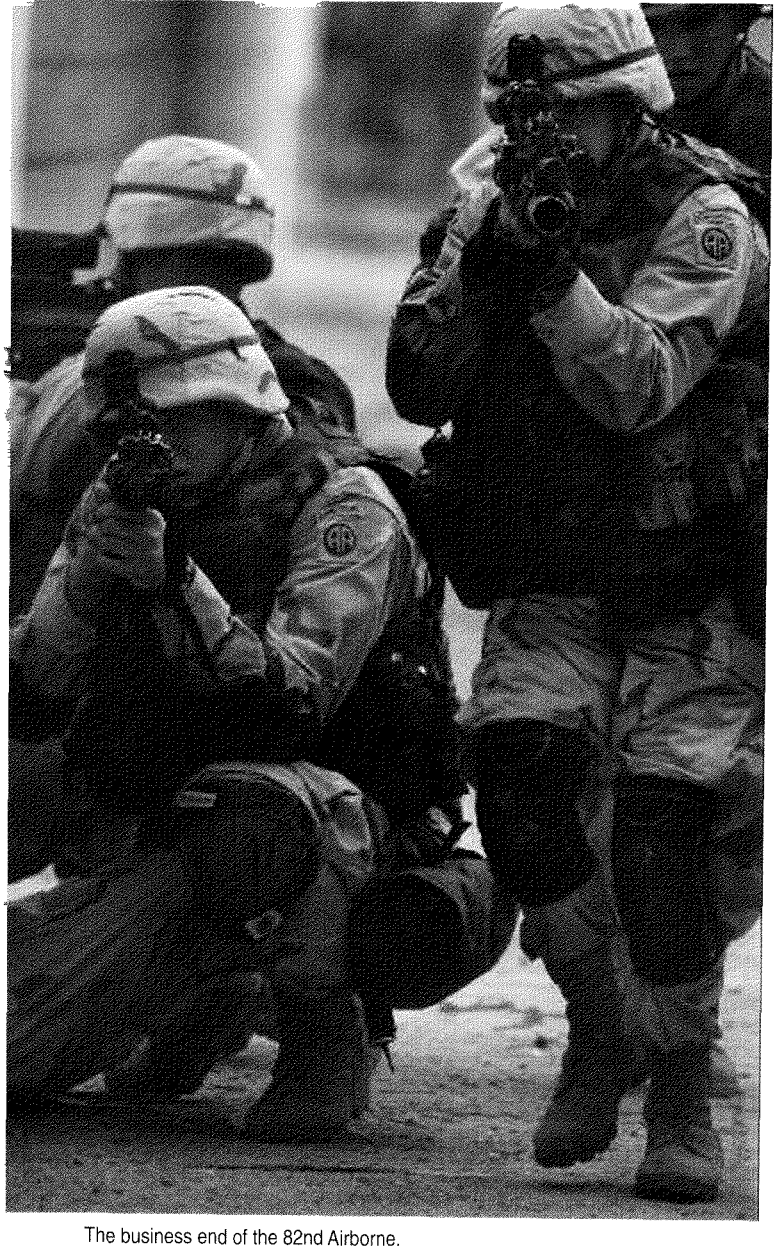

The business end of the 82nd Airborne.

Our soldiers aren't all saints and scholars, but they are a good cross section of our country, and the base of our military pyramid is full of impressive individuals. There are also many unusually talented men and women at the middle and top of the command structure. The commanders of our troops in Iraq today are instructive examples.

Brigadier General Martin Dempsey, who leads the 1st Armored Division in Baghdad, has earned, in addition to his military achievements, three separate Master's degrees. Major General David Petraeus, whose leadership of the 101st Airborne has temporarily made him the prince of northern Iraq, is well equipped for that task thanks to, among other credentials, a Ph.D. in international relations from Princeton (which he earned two years faster than most doctoral candidates). The commander of our third full division in Iraq, Major General Raymond Odierno of the 4th Infantry Division, has a Master's in nuclear engineering, and is known equally for his brilliance and for his fighting prowess.

These smart, competent soldiers and officers are essential to America's new style of fighting—which can be likened to chess, compared to the "checkers" style of combat (much slower, less mobile, more ponderous) that was practiced as recently as the first Gulf War. Far more than in the past, today's servicemen must think and adapt on the fly. The speed of maneuver and pace of battle are dramatically faster, and complex equipment and tactics must be mastered.

Our military units are substituting superior technology, communications, mobility, and intelligence for the sheer mass of force they once relied on. Of course, this formula works only if there are bright, flexible, self-reliant people behind the wheels of the vehicles, at the eyepieces of the scopes, and on the triggers of the weapons. Those smart, tough decision-makers, much more than the advanced technologies themselves, are the key to the superiority of today's American military.

Independent thinking by line soldiers is not only tolerated in our armed forces at present, it is *required* by the new freelancing style of warfare. Outsiders who envision our fighting forces as authoritarian institutions would be quite surprised to learn how much less they rely on top-down order-giving than on small-unit problem-solving. Our military is highly meritocratic, and obstacles are generally surmounted after open, democratic-style contention among competing views. I witnessed many spirited debates—both among officers in the command tents and between privates and sergeants at the base of the military pyramid—over the best ways to achieve important objectives. The general modus operandi is competition: "May the smartest idea and biggest biceps win."

While they are extremely disciplined, our elite military outfits exhibit little intimidation or "yes man" syndrome. In the Kuwait camps before we plunged into combat in Iraq, I was amused to walk into a bathroom one night and find the 82nd's brigade commander—a man with life and death authority over about 3,000 men—scrubbing his dirty socks and underwear in a bucket, just like any good private.

So America's soldiers are skilled enough to fly missiles into designated windows, negotiate subtly with local leaders, and squeeze off one-mile sniper shots (actual Iraq War events I describe in my book). They have the openness and democratic habits to serve as good representatives of our free society. And they are also admirable on a third front: for their moral idealism.

Hollywood war stories like *Saving Private Ryan* and *Black Hawk Down* promulgate the notion that contemporary soldiers fight not for cause and country but simply for the survival of themselves and their buddies. I can report that that is emphatically untrue. America's soldiers are quite conscious of the titanic clash of moral universes that lies behind today's U.S. venture into the Middle East. Most of them are not only aware of the historical importance of this fight, but quite proud of their role in it, and broadly motivated by high principles extending far beyond self preservation.

Gregory Kolodciejczky was a New York City fireman. When

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the Twin Towers went down, 14 men from his stationhouse were killed, and Kolodciejczky decided to help make sure the events of that day would never be replayed in his country. So at age 32 he chucked everything and started a new career as a paratrooper. He believes that by fighting in Iraq he is honoring the memory of his dead friends, and helping protect Americans from future acts of terror.

I know numerous soldiers who put aside well-paying jobs, family life, graduate school, and comfortable careers after concluding, in the wake of September 11, that their country needed their military service. U.S. fighters in Iraq placed NYPD stickers on their trucks, drew pictures of the World Trade Center on bombs, and named one of our staging grounds in the Kuwaiti desert Camp 93—in honor of Flight 93, where 9/11 passengers fought back against their hijackers. The evening before the 82nd Airborne's nastiest battle this spring, one soldier duct-taped an "I Love NY" T-shirt to the wall of the building where the assault was being planned, just to remind himself what he was doing in that distant and forsaken country.

If their personal safety were their main concern, they would be chefs or graduate students, not GIs.

Lieutenant Rob Gillespie strongly personifies the principled nature of many American fighters. He grew up on Long Island in a household of self-described "do-gooders and *Village Voice* subscribers." During his first year at the University of Southern California the earnest Gillespie was considering joining the Peace Corps when, thanks to USC's ROTC program, he began running into soldiers just back from the Balkans. He asked them what they had been doing with their lives. The answer was that they had been stopping genocide, rape, and religious persecution of thousands of civilians.

In the course of these conversations Gillespie realized that if he really wanted to help the oppressed and miserable of our planet, he could do more as a member of the U.S. armed forces than in any other occupation. He transferred to West Point, and is now an up-and-coming cavalry officer.

Families of some of the soldiers I've reported on have shared their letters home with me, and many of these reflect the American idealism of those men and women. Lieutenant John Gibson of the 82nd's 325th Regiment wrote his mom and dad on his birthday this summer to report that "we are homesick and want to see our families and loved ones, but not at the expense of an incomplete mission. I know that a completely free and democratic Iraq may not be in place by the time that I leave, but it will be significantly under way before I am redeployed. I see things here, on a daily basis, that hurt the human heart. I see poverty, crime, terrorism, murder, and stupidity. However, I see hope in the eyes of many Iraqis, hope for a chance to govern themselves. I think they are on the cusp of a new adventure, a chance for an entire country to start over again."

Walter Rausch, a machine gunner in the 101st Airborne who hails from my own home town in upstate New York, encapsulates a similar spirit and idealism in a letter to his parents: "We take so much for granted. My dearest beloved family, don't waste a single second. We have been blessed to be raised in ways that are true and just. These people have known nothing but oppression, tyranny, and poverty. We have more things than some of these Iraqi children could possibly imagine. And I am thankful that the children's innocence was preserved during most of this conflict."

Private Melville Johnson of the 82nd Airborne reflected on his time in combat this way: "In the city of Samawah my battalion engaged in the hottest firefight the division has been in since Vietnam. Every paratrooper

American troopers on the roll.

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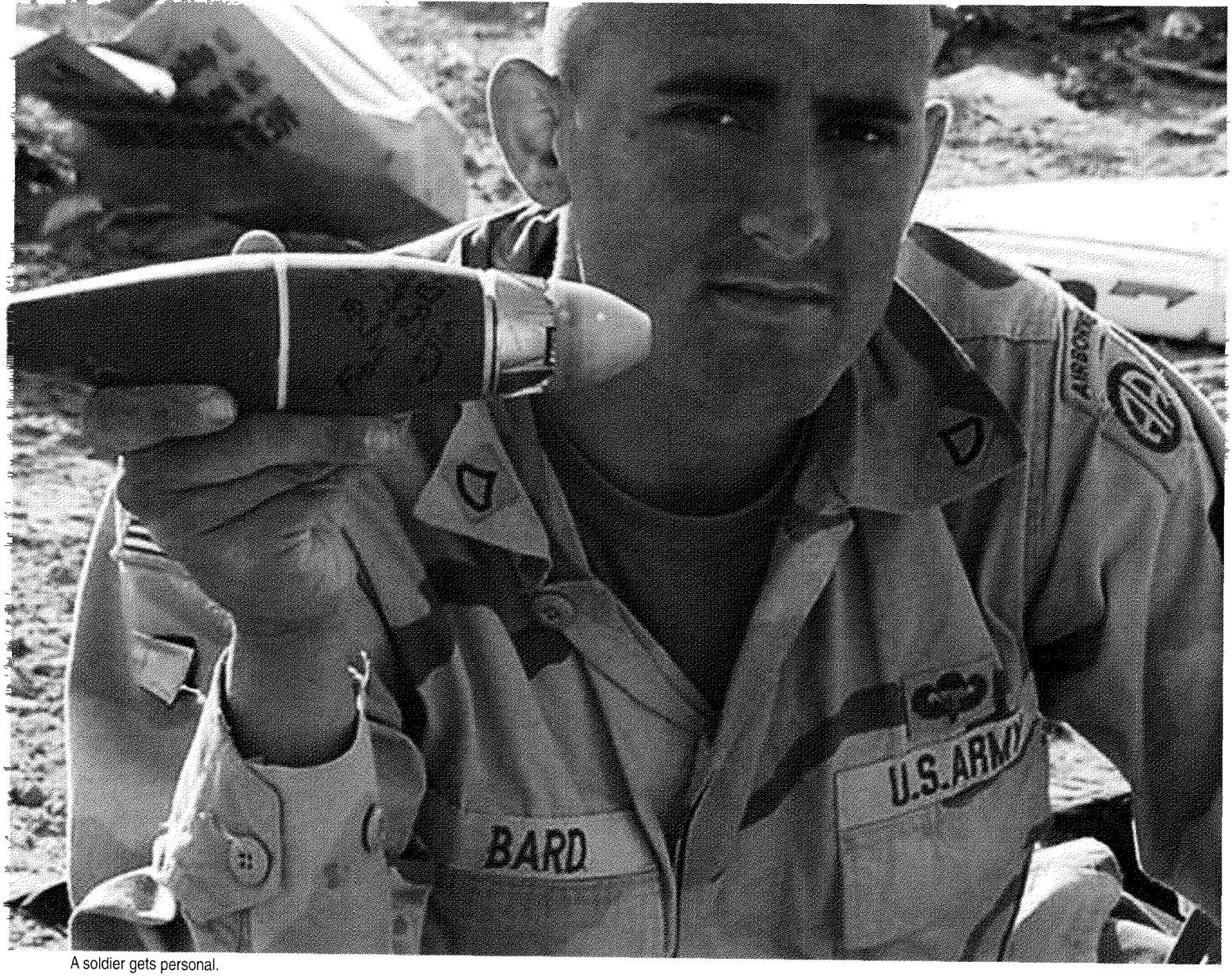

A soldier gets personal.

who fought in that battle fought bravely and honorably. The day after the battle, we took positions in the streets among the blown-out buildings. One by one the people returned. The adults set commerce in motion. The laughter and splashing of children playing in the Euphrates was a great relief to hear. Every day I was blessed with kind words of gratitude.

"I feel Iraq has real potential for the future—with the help of the U.S. military, humanitarian agencies, and the installation of a just, fair, and compassionate government. I feel tremendously for the American families that lost a loved one. I also feel for the families of the enemy. At night, before I rest, I think of the enemy we killed. I remember the way their bodies lay in unnatural states, positions God never intended them to take. I hope these images will soon fade.

"Would I willingly, happily, and completely fight this war again? Yes. I would do it all over again with just as much, or more, determination."

Any honest observer will be struck by the way American soldiers wrap ferocity and decency in the very same uniform. They are skilled, aggressive, and deadly in a fight. But they don't nurse grudges; they forgive easily; they are gracious, charitable, and humane to opponents. My conclusion from watching them in mortal combat is that these men are the worst people imaginable to have as military enemies, and the very best to surrender to.

Some people have a hard time believing that our soldiers who endure tough physical conditions and unpredictable attacks in Iraq's danger zones are keeping their morale and fighting spirit up. They assume our servicemen must feel discouraged and taken advantage of. What such people forget is that there are some men whose reflex is to run *into* danger, rather than away from it. Those are the men who become police officers and firemen. Those are the men who become soldiers. They know their work is perilous, and they don't want to be hurt, but if their own personal safety were their main concern, they would be chefs or graduate students, not GIs. Chasing down bad guys provides these soldiers with a deep sense of satisfaction that is often lost on outside observers.

The American patriot Thomas Paine once said, "If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, so that my children may have

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peace." This is a creed that many soldiers hold to quite literally. To a man, the deployed GIs I am in touch with tell me they don't want any waffling or hesitation about finishing the job in Iraq. Some of these men were there in 1991; they want a more conclusive victory this time so they won't need to come back again. They say it is much less important that the Iraq war be over soon than that it be *successful*, and they know that will take time.

The sister of an 82nd soldier read me one of his letters this week in which he commented with great satisfaction on the lack of terrorist attacks in the U.S. itself over the last two years. That, he said, is exactly what our armed services are for—to deflect the pain of fighting from our homeland, transfer it to the enemy's backyard, and ultimately put an end to it. Easy for us to say from our armchairs; quite a noble sentiment from a man currently in the midst of the battle in the Sunni triangle.

American soldiers are quite conscious of the titanic clash of moral universes that lies behind today's U.S. venture into the Middle East.

Most American fighting men subscribe to the view put into words by John Stuart Mill: "War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself."

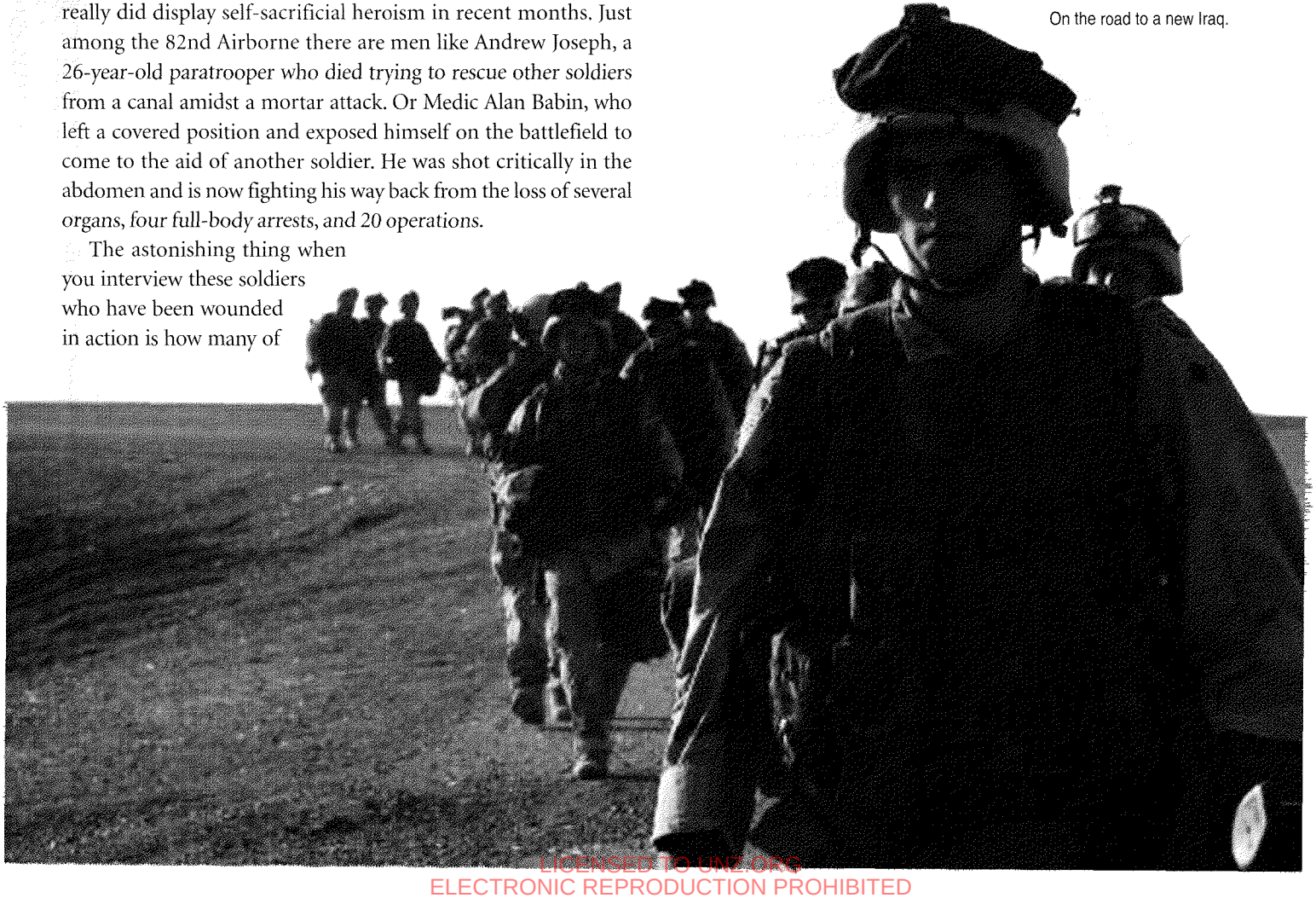
Amidst the sour soap opera surrounding Jessica Lynch, I hope Americans will remember that there are many U.S. soldiers who really did display self-sacrificial heroism in recent months. Just among the 82nd Airborne there are men like Andrew Joseph, a 26-year-old paratrooper who died trying to rescue other soldiers from a canal amidst a mortar attack. Or Medic Alan Babin, who left a covered position and exposed himself on the battlefield to come to the aid of another soldier. He was shot critically in the abdomen and is now fighting his way back from the loss of several organs, four full-body arrests, and 20 operations.

The astonishing thing when you interview these soldiers who have been wounded in action is how many of them volunteer the same thoughts: They don't regret the fight. There was somebody else who was even more selfless or brave. And (almost universally) how anxious they are to return to their units.

Where does this sturdiness come from? I can do no better than quote retired Army officer Tom Tinsley, who wrote to me in November: "The magic I found in the Army was repeated again and again. Colonels teaching Captains. Sergeants teaching Privates and Specialists. Handing down the tribal wisdom to the following generation. I have been in corporate life for seven years now, and have found nothing like it outside the Army. Leaders unselfishly preparing the next generation, who will in turn pass it on to those who will succeed them."

It's easy for critics on both the left and right to convince themselves that the United States is a decadent society, that our young people have all gone soft, that we will never have another generation like the men who climbed the cliffs at Normandy on D-Day. That judgment, I'm here to report, is utterly and completely wrong. We have soldiers in uniform today whom Americans can trust with any responsibility, any difficulty, any mortal challenge.

And at the end of this strenuous year, we give thanks for them.



On the road to a new Iraq.

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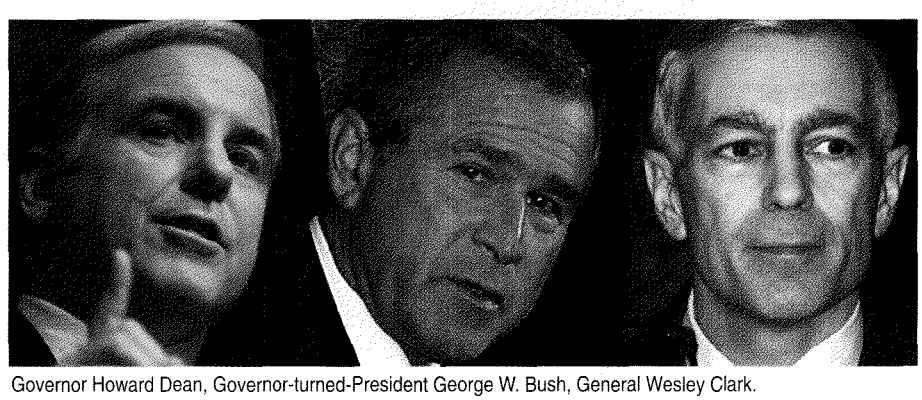
Governors (and Generals) Rule

By Christopher DeMuth



Newscom.com/BlackStar Photos/EPA Photos

Governor Howard Dean, Governor-turned-President George W. Bush, General Wesley Clark.

With early and sustained leads in the polls, in contributions, in the enthusiasm of crowds, and in the proficiency of his media appearances and campaign organization, former Vermont governor Howard Dean is the man to beat in the 2004 race for the Democratic Party's Presidential nomination. This has surprised political analysts in Washington and the national media. The Democratic candidates include prominent figures with long experience in national politics and policymaking, such as Senators Joe Lieberman and John Kerry and former House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt. How could they be bested by a former governor of a small, rural state with no experience in national affairs or exposure to the national electorate?

The conventional explanation is that Governor Dean has positioned himself well to the left of the other candidates on the war in Iraq, taxes, health care, and other issues. By leveling harsh attacks at President Bush, he has energized the left-liberal Democratic Party "base" in a way that the other, more seasoned and moderate candidates have not.

Democratic Party activists and primary voters are indeed more liberal than the rank-and-file, just as their GOP counterparts are more conservative than Republicans as a whole. But many primary voters also appear to want to win general elections, even at the expense of doctrinal purity. In recent primaries, more moderate candidates have routinely beaten more liberal or conservative candidates: George W. Bush over Steve Forbes, Bill Clinton over Tom Harkin, Bob Dole over Phil Gramm and Pat Buchanan. Governor Dean obviously appreciates this tendency: He has already recast himself as a moderate, emphasizing his record as a tight-fisted, budget-balancing, Second Amendment-respecting governor. As the long pre-primary season has worn on, the resilience and durability of the unexpected front-runner has become a political story of its own.

A better explanation of Howard Dean's lead, one that suggests it will continue, is that his political experience and identity are as a governor, while all of the other candidates, with the exception of Wesley Clark, are legislators. The Dean Surprise is merely the latest episode of the Governor Surprise, a quadrennial political drama. The year before a Presidential election, a clutch of candidates from the out-of-office party toss their hats in the ring, and Washington politicians and the national media focus intently on the senators or congressmen such as Al Gore, Bob Kerrey, Howard Baker, John Glenn, and Richard Lugar. But when the primaries arrive, the national legislators are swept away by a governor—Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, Michael Dukakis, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush. One has to go back to Senator Barry Goldwater's defeat of Governors Nelson Rockefeller and William Scranton for the GOP's 1964 nomination to find a clear exception to this pattern.

The dominance of governors in our Presidential politics is an old and durable phenomenon. Since the election of 1828, when Andrew Jackson's landslide victory over John Quincy Adams ended our initial era of Founding Father Presidents, governors have won more major party nominations and more general elections than any other category of Presidential candidate—and vastly more than candidates whose main political experience was in the U.S. Congress. The table on page 29 lists the occupational backgrounds of our main Presidential candidates since 1828.

The most striking pattern is the overwhelming dominance of governors and military leaders. Governors and generals together account for 52 percent of our major Presidential candidates (46 of 88) and 55 percent of our elected Presidents (17 of 31). They are also our most successful Presidents, with much higher re-

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election rates than those from other political backgrounds; as a result, governors and generals account for nearly two thirds of the Presidential victories since 1828 (28 wins in 44 elections). Only three of our 31 elected Presidents have come from a primarily legislative background, and none was re-elected.

The dominance of governors and generals over legislators is even more striking when one considers that the pool of legislators is much larger. Even if we limit the potential nominees to senators, there are always exactly twice as many senators as governors. So if senators were the equals of governors as Presidential candidates, we would have, over a long span of years, approximately twice as many senator-nominees as governor-nominees. In reality, the ratio is not 2:1 but rather 1:3 (11 senator-nominees to 32 governor-nominees).

Several candidates classified as "statesmen" (my catch-all category for those whose primary career positions had been unelected) had served in the Senate or House, but only incidentally. Of the four statesmen who were elected President, two had been legislators. Abraham Lincoln's single term in the House was incidental to his career as lawyer, orator, and Illinois Republican leader. James Buchanan served a decade in the House and a decade in the Senate, but prior to his nomination he had been Secretary of State for four years and ambassador to Great Britain for four years, and these positions were decisive to his nomination.

The dominance of governors and generals in American Presidential politics has persisted through many epochal changes in the composition of the U.S. electorate, in the nature of the issues confronting candidates, in styles of political campaigning, in the techniques of campaign financing, and in the procedures for selecting candidates. The pattern therefore reveals something essential and enduring about our political system and Presidential preferences. But what is that something, and is it likely to continue as our political system evolves further?

Many experts I have spoken with suggest that the governor/general preference displays the advantages of a fresh political face, and the disadvantages of being a Washington insider with a legislative paper trail. A legislator of any tenure, unlike a governor or general, will have cast yea-or-nay votes on a multitude of bills, providing rich opportunities for campaign opponents to select particular votes that are unpopular with important election constituencies. Legislator-candidates are therefore more vulnerable to attack in campaign debate, and less able to maneuver and position themselves according to campaign contingencies. In comparison, governors and generals have greater leeway in fashioning an appealing political identity.

Certainly, the desire to "clean house in Washington" is a strong and recurring one in U.S. politics, and has often worked to the advantage of governors and generals. But it is far from a complete explanation. For one thing, legislators challenging incumbent Presidents or Vice Presidents can rightly claim to be outsiders vis-a-vis the incumbent administration, and will have a paper trail to prove it with more particularity than governors do. In the 2000 Republican primaries, for instance, Senator John McCain was a more vociferous critic of the Clinton administration, and of Washington politics in general, than Governor George W. Bush.

Moreover, governor-candidates are often deeply involved in national affairs. Grover Cleveland championed government "reform" and pro-business causes. Woodrow Wilson promoted "progressive" national economic legislation. Ronald Reagan was known for welfare reform and confronting student demonstrators. Jimmy Carter gained national renown for renouncing racial discrimination in his first inaugural address in Georgia. Finally, the paper-trail explanation does not account for governors' and generals' much higher rates of re-election, when they are themselves Washington insiders with notorious paper trails on national issues.

More important, the focus on Congressional voting fails to capture a more fundamental weakness of legislators in a Presidential campaign—which is that they offer a *lower* degree of political accountability than governors and generals. Legislators act as participants in a murky, collective enterprise, not as individual decision makers. They often take credit for popular legislation while eluding accountability on controversial matters through omnibus bills, obscure riders, fuzzy legislative language, delegation of hard choices to executive agencies, and an array of procedural maneuvers. Almost any single vote can be explained away by special circumstances. The paper trails of governors and generals are much harder to explain away.

And that, in my view, takes us to the heart of the matter. I suggest that the major reason for the dominance of governors and generals in Presidential politics, and the weakness of legislators, is that governors and generals are CEOs. Governors have submitted budgets, hired and fired subordinates, presided over public emergencies, called out the National Guard, negotiated public strikes, exercised discretion in the enforcement of criminal and other public laws, and endured a succession of victories and defeats large and small. Military leaders have done most of those things and more: They have made decisions involving staggeringly large risks and, usually, have exhibited personal courage of the most impressive kind.

Legislators, in contrast, have made speeches, sat on committees, and cast votes—virtually none of them decisive in the manner of an executive decision. Worse, if they have been successful legislators—skilled at the legislative craft and popular with their peers—they have become legislative leaders, called upon to negotiate political compromises that are, by definition, *unprincipled*. That is an essential requirement of democratic government, but hardly the profile in leadership that a Presidential candidate seeks to project. Governors and generals also make compromises among conflicting interests, but the nature of the executive function forces them to make real choices and limits their ability to obfuscate and "muddle through."

It is not surprising, then, that of our three legislator-nominees elected to the Presidency, none had been legislative leaders, and only one, Benjamin Harrison, had any significant legislative

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record (and that during just a single Senate term). The other two, Warren Harding and John F. Kennedy, were blithe shirkers of their Senate duties with little involvement in legislative dealmaking. Nor is it surprising that, to take one of many recent examples, Senator John Kerry's campaign for the 2004 Democratic nomination consists almost entirely of references to his military record in the Vietnam War and his early experience as a county prosecutor, with nary a word about his two decades in the Senate.

None of this is to denigrate the importance of legislative practice, which is as crucial as executive practice to the success of representative government, especially in a vast nation such as ours with innumerable regional, economic, ethnic, and social divisions that must be reconciled in some manner. But legislative work attracts individuals, and produces résumés, of a different character than executive work, and the latter are likely to be much more impressive to voters selecting our most important public executive. Indeed, we may say that one of the hidden virtues of our form of government—where states possess a degree of independent sovereignty (rather than being administrative subdivisions of the national government, as in France), and where the head of government is elected independently of the legislature (rather than being the leader of the largest faction of the legislature, as in parliamentary systems)—is that it tends to cultivate and elevate national leaders whose skills and temperaments are distinctively executive rather than legislative.

It is worth noting that the tendency emphasized here is just that—a tendency, not a complete explanation. If executive ability were the only thing voters looked for in a President, we would see many business executives in the White House. In fact we see none.

What is clear is that Americans are very skeptical about politicians in their purest embodiment: the career legislator. They seek in their President someone who appears to transcend politics-as-usual. Successful experience as a public executive or military leader is an excellent means of cultivating the requisite political transcendence, while demonstrating an ability to make important policy decisions. Another means is oratorical facility—the ability to crystallize in words, from the confusion of political conflict, that which is essential, ennobling, and expressive of vital national aspirations. Four of the five two-term Presidents in the twentieth century were governors who were also eloquent speakers: Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan, and Bill Clinton. Occasionally, great rhetorical skill alone will suffice (Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy). But more routinely, executive experience and temperament alone, even when accompanied by a plain or even inarticulate speaking style (think Dwight Eisenhower), conveys a no-nonsense position above conventional politics that appeals to voters.

Will governors and generals continue to dominate our Presidential politics, and will legislators continue to be also-rans? The analysis presented here suggests they will, but we need to consider whether recent developments might change that analysis. The past prominence of governors was in part the result of the central role of large states in the party conventions that chose Presidential candidates up to the 1970s. Today, the party conventions have become largely ceremonial, and candidates are selected by an accumulation of primary elections heavily dominated by the media and mass campaigning. These changes may be thought to work to the relative advantage of legislators—who are better known to national reporters, and generally receive most of the media attention in the early phases of campaigns.

The growing importance of the media and the "nationalization" of the selection process may indeed have drawn more legislators into the fray. But to date there is no evidence that changes in the selection process have altered the results to the advantage of legislators. To the contrary, the relative success of governors has increased over time: It was greater in the twentieth century than in the nineteenth century, greater in the latter half of the twentieth century than in the first half, and greatest of all in the latest quarter century of media-and-primary-driven nominating contests.

If anything, modern selection procedures may have advantaged governors, by expanding the field of plausible governor-candidates to include those from small states with few electoral or nominating-convention votes. The governors of Georgia, Arkansas, and Vermont would have gotten short shrift at the state-boss-controlled party conventions of times past, but governors Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and Howard Dean have been highly proficient in mobilizing modern campaigns. Today's more democratic, media-driven politics may be amplifying the natural advantages of governors over legislators, casting in more vivid relief the differences between executive and legislative abilities, records, and temperaments.

The future of generals involves an additional issue. The previous prominence of military leaders was in part the result of the central role of the military in the settling of the continent and in the Civil War. Since the 1880 election between Civil War Generals James Garfield and Winfield Hancock, only a single military leader has been a Presidential candidate in a general election: World War II Supreme Commander Eisenhower. World War I, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and the protracted political-military contest of the Cold War were not the sorts of conflicts to produce popular military heroes. The twentieth-century generals who might have been Presidential timber, such as Douglas MacArthur, George Marshall, and Colin Powell, did not make the run.

But that may be changing now. The collapse of the Soviet Union, and the arrival of a new war on terror, have led to a succession of military actions that have displayed the proficiency of U.S. armed forces and revived appreciation for the martial virtues. Public approval of the military is now higher than at any time since World War II, and higher than for any other profession or public institution. The near candidacy of Colin Powell in 1996 and the 2004 candidacy of Wesley Clark may presage the return of the military leader to our Presidential politics and, eventually, to the White House.

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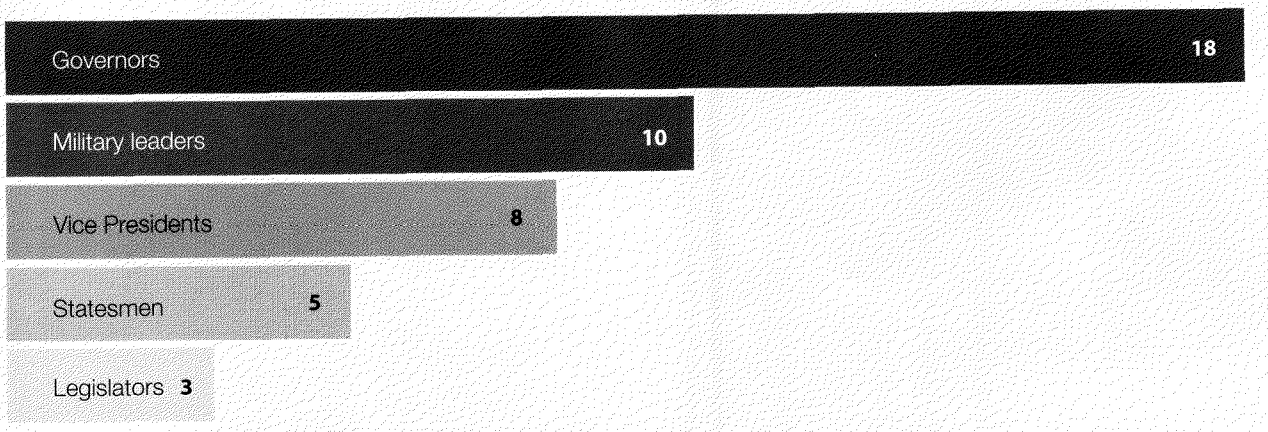
Winners of the 44 Presidential races over the last 172 years:



Election	Top two finishers	Background
1828	**Andrew Jackson**	Military leader
	John Quincy Adams	Statesman
1832	**Andrew Jackson**	Military leader
	Henry Clay	Legislator
1836	**Martin Van Buren**	**Vice President**
	Wm. Henry Harrison	Military leader
1840	**Wm. Henry Harrison**	**Military leader**
	Martin Van Buren	Vice President
1844	**James Polk**	**Governor**
	Henry Clay	Legislator
1848	**Zachary Taylor**	**Military leader**
	Lewis Cass	Governor
1852	**Franklin Pierce**	**Military leader**
	Winfield Scott	Military leader
1856	**James Buchanan**	**Statesman**
	John Frémont	Legislator
1860	**Abraham Lincoln**	**Statesman**
	J.C. Breckinridge	Vice President
1864	**Abraham Lincoln**	**Statesman**
	George McClellan	Military leader
1868	**Ulysses Grant**	**Military leader**
	Horatio Seymour	Governor
1872	**Ulysses Grant**	**Military leader**
	Horace Greeley	Statesman
1876	**Rutherford Hayes**	**Governor**
	Samuel Tilden	Governor
1880	**James Garfield**	**Military leader**
	Winfield Hancock	Military leader
1884	**Grover Cleveland**	**Governor**
	James Blaine	Legislator
1888	**Benjamin Harrison**	**Legislator**
	Grover Cleveland	Governor
1892	**Grover Cleveland**	**Governor**
	Benjamin Harrison	Legislator
1896	**William McKinley**	**Governor**
	William Bryan	Statesman
1900	**William McKinley**	**Governor**
	William Bryan	Statesman
1904	**Theodore Roosevelt**	**Vice President**
	Alton Parker	Statesman
1908	**William Taft**	**Statesman**
	William Bryan	Statesman
1912	**Woodrow Wilson**	**Governor**
	William Taft	Statesman
1916	**Woodrow Wilson**	**Governor**
	Charles Hughes	Governor
1920	**Warren Harding**	**Legislator**
	James Cox	Governor
1924	**Calvin Coolidge**	**Vice President**
	John Davis	Statesman
1928	**Herbert Hoover**	**Statesman**
	Alfred Smith	Governor
1932	**Franklin Roosevelt**	**Governor**
	Herbert Hoover	Statesman
1936	**Franklin Roosevelt**	**Governor**
	Alfred Landon	Governor
1940	**Franklin Roosevelt**	**Governor**
	Wendell Willkie	Statesman
1944	**Franklin Roosevelt**	**Governor**
	Thomas Dewey	Governor
1948	**Harry Truman**	**Vice President**
	Thomas Dewey	Governor
1952	**Dwight Eisenhower**	**Military leader**
	Adlai Stevenson	Governor
1956	**Dwight Eisenhower**	**Military leader**
	Adlai Stevenson	Governor
1960	**John Kennedy**	**Legislator**
	Richard Nixon	Vice President
1964	**Lyndon Johnson**	**Vice President**
	Barry Goldwater	Legislator
1968	**Richard Nixon**	**Vice President**
	Hubert Humphrey	Vice President
1972	**Richard Nixon**	**Vice President**
	George McGovern	Legislator
1976	**Jimmy Carter**	**Governor**
	Gerald Ford	Vice President
1980	**Ronald Reagan**	**Governor**
	Jimmy Carter	Governor
1984	**Ronald Reagan**	**Governor**
	Walter Mondale	Vice President
1988	**George H.W. Bush**	**Vice President**
	Michael Dukakis	Governor
1992	**Bill Clinton**	**Governor**
	George H.W. Bush	Vice President
1996	**Bill Clinton**	**Governor**
	Robert Dole	Legislator
2000	**George W. Bush**	**Governor**
	Al Gore	Vice President

Note: For more details, and definitions, see this article at TAEmag.com

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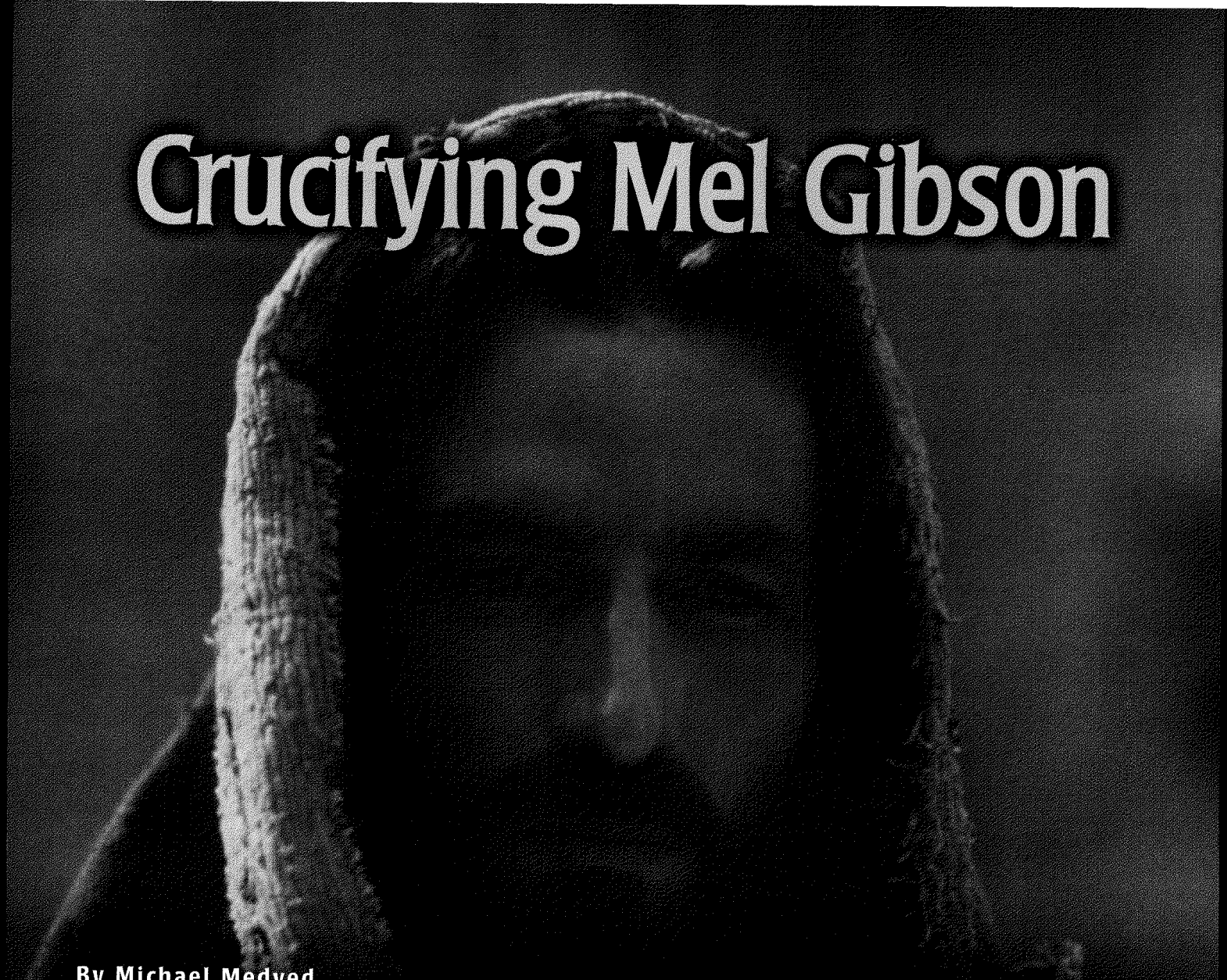
Crucifying Mel Gibson



Courtesy of Icon Films

By Michael Medved

A serious filmmaker would normally feel gratified if his cinematic work inspired impassioned debate, intense emotional response, detailed analysis, even raging controversy. Well in advance of his picture's release, Mel Gibson has already produced that sort of reaction with *The Passion of the Christ,* his brutal, graphic, and lyrical account of the last 12 hours in the life of Christ. But Gibson insists he neither expected nor wanted the bitter arguments over the allegedly anti-Semitic content of the film.

The vitriolic denunciations of his artistic integrity, and even his personal religiosity, have proven especially painful to Gibson—who directs *The Passion* (his first such effort since *Braveheart*) but does not act in it. One critic who acknowledged that she had not yet seen any version of the film, Paula Fredriksen of Boston University, went so far as to declare that her reading of the script left no doubt that the movie will provoke anti-Jewish violence when it is shown outside the United States. "When violence breaks out," she wrote in *The New Republic,* "Mel Gibson will have a much higher authority than professors and bishops to answer to."

Such hysterical pronouncements, all too typical of the current storm over *The Passion,* emerged out of a poisonous combination of mistakes, misunderstandings, and sheer malice.

The viciousness first appeared in a March article in the *New York Times Magazine* that went to press before Gibson had even finished filming his epic in Italy. Writer Christopher Noxon acknowledged a family feud with Gibson—his father had played a prominent role in trying to block construction of the traditionalist Catholic church in Malibu that Gibson funded with several million dollars in donations. Noxon's article represented a continuation of that localized quarrel. Unable to speak to Gibson himself, the reporter interviewed the star's 84-year-old father, Hutton Gibson, and highlighted the elderly man's unconventional, occasionally outrageous views—including the belief that the fatal planes of 9/11 had been "remote controlled," and the notion that the figure of 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust had been exaggerated.

Inevitably, this article led to horrified press reports that Gibson's father was a "holocaust denier" (a charge that both Mel and

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his father emphatically reject) and gave rise to suspicions that his unfinished film about Jesus expressed some anti-Semitic agenda. After all, the few facts known about the project prior to its completion made it sound weird, eccentric, and excessive. The star invested nearly $25 million of his own money to make the film. At one time he suggested that the dialogue, almost entirely in Aramaic with a smattering of Latin, would appear without subtitles. Reports from the set suggested that leading man Jim Caviezel (*The Thin Red Line, The Count of Monte Cristo*), another devout Catholic, had become so immersed in the role that he suffered significant injury while filming the violent torture of Christ. The rumors about the movie reached such an intense pitch that Paula Fredriksen's bruising attack on a film she had never seen appeared under the sneering headline, "Mad Mel."

The Passion is an audacious work of art that represents by far the most compelling cinematic adaptation of a Biblical story ever attempted by Hollywood.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Defamation League, the world's most prominent watchdog group combating anti-Semitism, had received an early, unauthorized copy of Gibson's script (presumably before its translation into Aramaic) and assembled a group of Catholic and Jewish scholars to evaluate it. Gibson and colleagues were furious that this stolen script, which they insist has been changed in many of its essential elements, was subject to such analysis. Predictably, the scholars "unanimously agreed that the screenplay reviewed was replete with objectionable elements that would promote anti-Semitism." In a blistering June 24 press release, the ADL expressed very public concerns that *The Passion* would "portray Jews as bloodthirsty, sadistic, and money-hungry enemies of Jesus."

At this point, I became personally involved in the burgeoning controversy. As a film critic and cultural commentator who also happens to be an observant Jew (and a long-time president of an Orthodox congregation), I felt heartsick over the harsh denunciations of an unfinished motion picture that almost no one had seen. In the past, I've supported and spoken for the Anti-Defamation League, even serving as one of the featured speakers for its national convention eight years ago. I called the ADL office in New York City to express my opinion that the hostile tone of its press statements would destroy all chance that Gibson might cooperate in making adjustments to his motion picture. I also invited ADL director Abe Foxman to discuss the controversy over *The Passion* on my nationally syndicated radio show, but on several occasions he declined. In discussing the issue on my broadcasts, and in an op-ed column, I emphasized my sense that Gibson had been unfairly targeted with wildly premature attacks on his movie, and by a guilt-by-association campaign focused on his elderly father.

I also expressed my belief that the criticism of his unseen movie stemmed in part from the predominantly liberal political perspective of the Anti-Defamation League and other groups speaking for the Jewish establishment. Numerous commentators have noted recent shifts in the political allegiance of Jewish voters. George W. Bush has won greater popularity in the Jewish community than any Republican since Ronald Reagan. And fervent support for Israel by evangelical Christians has produced an increasingly vibrant alliance between committed Jews and Christian conservatives. The ADL, which has been outspokenly critical of the so-called "Christian Right" on many occasions, clearly looks askance at this emerging coalition. Could the controversy over *The Passion* help to divide Jews from the fervent Christians likely to embrace the film?

The warmth of that embrace became apparent in July, as soon as Mel Gibson began showing a rough cut of his movie to selected religious, political, and entertainment leaders. Praise for the artistry and power of his accomplishment proved all but universal. Jack Valenti, the former aide to President Lyndon Johnson who has served for almost 40 years as president of the Motion Picture Association of America, hailed *The Passion* as one of the greatest movies he had ever seen, and a sure bet as an Oscar contender.

When I watched the rough cut at the offices of Gibson's Icon Entertainment International, I also felt overwhelmed by its lyrical intensity and devastating immediacy: the suffering of Christ (superbly portrayed by the haunted and haunting Jim Caviezel) becomes almost unendurable. The much-derided decision to force the international cast to deliver the lines in Aramaic also works brilliantly, emphasizing the almost unbridgeable distance between the world of first-century Judea and our own, and avoiding the banal, anachronistic chatter typical of less authentic Biblical movies ("You mad, adorable fool, Moses!" Ann Baxter told Charlton Heston in *The Ten Commandments*).

The charges that the film emphasized the anti-Semitic elements of the Gospel story also struck me as wildly overblown. In the past, passion plays sometimes fomented Jew hatred by linking the New Testament persecutors of Jesus with contemporary Jews. These renditions depicted the Temple authorities wearing prayer shawls, phylacteries, sidelocks, beards, and hook noses that emphasized their "Jewish" identity in ways modern Europeans would readily recognize.

Gibson's film pointedly avoids such inflammatory stereotypes. In fact, the words "Jew" or "Jewish" seldom, if ever, appear in the subtitles. The high priest and his followers most certainly come across as vicious, self-important, and bloodthirsty, but they seem motivated by pomposity, arrogance, and insecurity rather than religious corruption or ethnic curse. The movie also avoids the regrettable tendency of other cinematic treatments of the death of Jesus, in which Judas and the conniving priests of the Temple look swarthy and Semitic but Jesus and his loyal followers appear all-American, or even Nordic (the great Swedish actor Max von Sydow played Jesus in 1965's *The Greatest Story Ever Told*). In *The Passion*, on the other hand, Gibson emphasizes the Jewish identity of his hero, and an actress from the Rumanian Yiddish

Long-time movie authority Michael Medved is a nationally syndicated radio host based in Seattle.

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Courtesy of Icon Films

Theatre, Maia Morgenstern, plays his mother Mary.

While the movie hardly qualifies as the hateful anti-Semitic screed described by its critics, it remains a difficult film for any religiously committed Jew to watch. In discussing my reactions to his work in a wide-ranging four-hour conversation after the screening, Gibson insisted that *The Passion* is meant to make everyone uncomfortable, not just Jews. For us, however, there's a special squirm factor involved in watching officials of a long-destroyed Temple, which we still revere as sacred, behaving in a cruel, sadistic manner. Like any other Jew with pride and commitment regarding his own religious tradition, I might have preferred a movie that interpreted the Gospel sources to place primary blame for the death of Jesus on the Roman authorities.

Gibson, however, remains fiercely determined to bring to the screen what he considers the truth of the New Testament. He has said elsewhere that the Holy Spirit played the dominant role in shaping his film and that as the human director, he was merely "directing traffic." Without question, an interpretation of the story in which the Judean priests and the Judean mob played a prominent role in demanding the death of Christ would hardly fall outside the Christian mainstream. In John's Gospel, his fellow Jews repeatedly attempt to stone Jesus and cry "Crucify him, crucify him!" (19:6). In Matthew, the Jewish mob howls, "His blood be on us and on our children" (27:5)—an explosive line which Gibson had originally included in his film, but which he had already excised in the version I saw. The Orthodox Jewish scholar David Klinghoffer argues that when organizations like the ADL demand that Gibson absolve Jews from blame in the death of Jesus, they ask him not only to disregard the Gospels, but to ignore the teachings of our own tradition. "Authoritative Jewish sources teach that Jesus died at least partly thanks to decisions taken by his fellow Jews," Klinghoffer writes in the Jewish *Forward*, proceeding to quote the Talmud and Moses Maimonides.

The most frustrating aspect of the current recriminations over *The Passion* involves the failure of most of the major Jewish organizations to take advantage of Gibson's repeatedly expressed willingness to work constructively with Jewish leaders and scholars to adjust and fine tune his film. He refuses to surrender to the ADL, however, because of lingering distrust engendered by their exploitation of the "stolen script" and their pre-emptive condemnation of a movie they had not seen.

On August 8, Gibson traveled to Houston for a special screening of his still unfinished project. More than 30 members of the Jewish community were invited to watch the movie, along with 50 evangelical and Catholic leaders. Rabbi Eugene Korn, director of interfaith affairs for the Anti-Defamation League, signed a confidentiality agreement, as did other members of the audience, promising not to discuss what he had seen. This pledge did not prevent him from telling *The Jewish Week* that "the tragic dimension to this movie is the way it portrays the Jews in the worst way as the sinister enemies of God." Korn reportedly engaged in an acrimonious exchange with Gibson after the screening and told the press that the star "seems to be callous to the fear and concerns of his critics."

I know firsthand that there is no basis whatsoever for this charge of "callousness." I've spoken with Gibson nearly a dozen times regarding his heartfelt desire to avoid wounding members of the Jewish community. He says repeatedly that he always wanted *The Passion* to unify people rather than divide them. Before the setback in Houston, Icon had announced an ambitious "Jewish Initiative" and had begun putting together lists of Jewish opinion leaders, representing every religious and political outlook, to respond to the film and to help shape the study guides and educational materials that will be distributed along with it. Mel spoke excitedly and hopefully about using the film to take Jewish-Christian dialogue to a constructive new level.

Those plans are now "on hold" due to his sense of betrayal following the public relations disaster in Houston. The headline of the article in *The Jewish Week* proclaimed "Jews Horrified by Gibson's Jesus Film," while the Internet Movie Data Base announced its story with the line "Jews Slam Gibson Movie After First Screening."

At this point, the major question for the ADL leaders, who seem determined to continue the open warfare with one of the world's most popular stars, would be: What do they hope to accomplish? Given Mel's determination and clout, they will not succeed in stopping him from releasing and distributing his movie. Nor can they prevent tens of millions of Christians from applauding the film for what it is: an audacious work of art that represents by far the most compelling cinematic adaptation of a Biblical story ever attempted by Hollywood. Whether or not *The Passion* becomes a box office hit (and I believe the odds stand heavily in its favor), the high-

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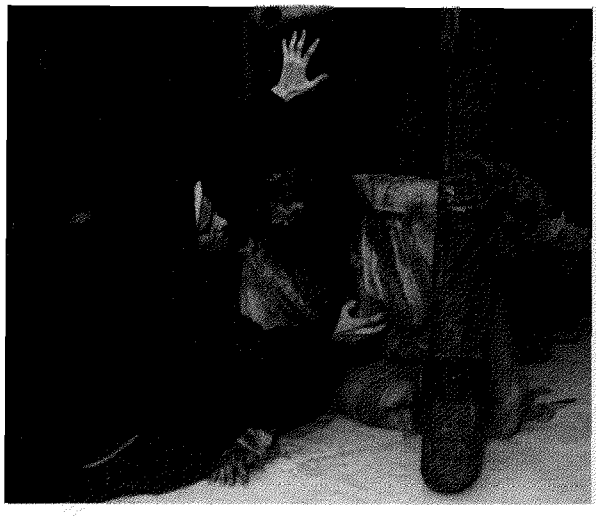

Hysterical pronouncements over *The Passion* emerged out of a poisonous combination of mistakes, misunderstandings, and sheer malice.

profile charges of anti-Semitism seem counterproductive. If the film goes on to commercial success, the shrill Jewish critics of the film will only have highlighted their own impotence and irrelevance. And if the movie bombs at the box office and reaches only limited audiences, it can't make a significant contribution to anti-Semitism. So all the frenzied attacks serve no purpose whatsoever.

The very idea that a two-hour movie could generate a new wave of anti-Semitic violence makes no sense. Anyone disposed to hostility toward Jews already knows the elements of the Gospels that are unflattering to Jews; there's no need for Mel Gibson to remind them. Moreover, if you feel such hatred in your heart that a well-intentioned motion picture in Aramaic could inspire you to commit brutal attacks, then trimming lines and re-editing scenes won't prevent that reaction anyway. The sweeping condemnation of the movie by Rabbi Korn and Abe Foxman (who still hasn't seen it, by the way) make it clear that they don't really want to change the movie; they simply want to stop it from coming out.

A ludicrous Reuters story ("Calif. Rabbi Says 'Passion' Already Fueling Hatred") demonstrates the worst possible outcome of the present charges and counter-charges. Rabbi Marvin Hier, founder of the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center declared that *The Passion* had "already unleashed a wave of anti-Semitism in the United States." He told Reuters that his "Jewish human rights organization" had already received dozens of hate calls and letters prompted by the film.

Taking Rabbi Hier at his word, consider for a moment the true source of this "new wave of anti-Semitism." The movie won't be released until February 25, 2004, and so far Gibson has shown the film to only a few hundred people in total. The hate-filled calls and letters that the Rabbi has received, in other words, could not be in response to a movie that remains almost entirely unseen; they could only represent the indignant (and utterly predictable) reaction to Rabbi Hier's own ceaseless denunciation of Gibson's work. Many Christians may feel rightly enraged by an attempt to control Gibson's expression of his personal faith, just as Rabbi Hier would feel appropriately resentful of any efforts by outsiders to dictate the way he lived his Judaism.

Sadly, the battle over *The Passion* may indeed provoke new hatred of the Jews. That hostility will center, however, not on a few remote and exotic figures who play villainous parts in a new motion picture, but on the reckless maneuvering of real-life Jewish leaders whose arrogance and short-sightedness has led them into a tragic, needless, no-win public relations war.

Selective Outrage Musn't Fritter Away Friendship

By Rabbi Daniel Lapin

Clearly the crucifixion of Jesus is a sensitive topic, but prominent Christians who previewed Mel Gibson's forthcoming film, *The Passion of the Christ*—including good friends like James Dobson and Michael Novak, who have always demonstrated acute sensitivity to Jewish concerns—see it as a religiously inspiring movie and refute charges that it is anti-Semitic. As an Orthodox rabbi with a wary eye on Jewish history, I fear that the strident protests registered against the film by some Jews, well-intentioned though some may be, are ill-advised and imprudent.

Do we really want to open up the Pandora's Box of suggesting that any faith may demand the removal of material that it finds offensive from the doctrines of any other faith? Do we really want to return to those dark times when Catholic authorities attempted to strip from the Talmud those passages that are uncomplimentary toward Jesus? I think it far better that we allow all faiths their own beliefs, even if we find those beliefs at odds with our own. This way we can all prosper safely under the Constitutional protection of the United States of America.

Besides, I believe those who publicly protest Mel Gibson's film lack moral legitimacy. To understand this, we must take ourselves back in time to the fall of 1999. That was when Arnold Lehman, the Jewish director of the Brooklyn Museum presented a show called "Sensation." It featured, from the collection of British Jew Charles Saatchi, several works that debased Catholicism, including Chris Ofili's dung-bedecked Madonna.

You may wonder why I highlight the Jewish ethnicity of the players in the Brooklyn Museum saga. My reason for doing so is that everyone else recognized that they were Jewish, and there is merit in those of us who are Jews knowing how we appear in the eyes of those among whom we live.

And the Brooklyn exhibit was not the first time that Arnold Lehman had chosen to offend Catholics. While he was director

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of the Baltimore Museum, in a display of gross insensitivity to that city's Catholics, he screened *Hell's Angel*, a film denouncing Mother Teresa as a religious extremist and depicting her in obscenely uncomplimentary and ghoulish terms. I am sorry to report that no Jewish organizations protested this gratuitous insult of a universally respected Catholic icon.

Almost every Christian organization angrily denounced the vile bigotry sponsored by the Brooklyn Museum. Especially prominent was William Donohue, president of The Catholic League, who has always stood firmly with Jews in the fight against genuine anti-Semitism. Now, in his fight against anti-Catholicism, he appealed to Jewish organizations in vain. Almost every Christian denomination vigorously protested the Brooklyn Museum's abhorrently graphic assault on Christian belief. Even Mayor Rudolph Giuliani expressed his outrage by trying to withhold public funding from the museum.

Where was the Jewish expression of solidarity against such ugliness? Only a small group of Orthodox Jews joined their fellow Americans in protest at this literal defilement of Christianity with feces. Were other Jews silent? Unfortunately not. A small but disproportionately vocal number actually defended the Brooklyn Museum's anti-Christianism. Norman Siegel and Arthur Eisenberg of the New York Civil Liberties Union, Steven Shapiro of the American Civil Liberties Union, and lawyer Floyd Abrams were active apologists. Although revulsion at the "Sensation" exhibit was widespread at synagogues and around dinner tables, few Jews publicly supported our Catholic friends in the time of their pain.

You may also remember Martin Scorsese's 1988 film, *The Last Temptation of Christ.* Then, too, almost every Christian denomination protested Universal Studio's release of a movie so slanderous that it would have provoked howls of outrage from the entire country had it been made about Moses or Martin Luther King, Jr. As it was, Christians were left to defend their faith quite alone, except for one solitary courageous Jew, Dennis Prager. Most Americans knew that Universal was run by Lew Wasserman. Most Americans also knew Lew's ethnicity. Perhaps many now wonder why Mel Gibson is not entitled to the same artistic freedom we accorded Lew Wasserman.

When the Weinstein brothers, through their Miramax Films, distributed *Priest* in 1994, Catholics were again left to protest this unflattering depiction of their faith alone, while many Jewish organizations proclaimed the primacy of artistic freedom. Surely Jewish organizations would enjoy more moral authority if they routinely protested all attacks on faith, not only those troubling to Judaism.

And why is the recently released film, *The Gospel of John*, immune to the censoring tactics of certain Jewish organizations? After all, the soundtrack includes virtually every word of the Gospel, including the most unflattering descriptions of Jewish priests and Pharisees during Jesus's time. Could the conspicuous silence from Jewish organizations possibly have anything to do with the ethnicity of the producers of *The Gospel of John*, who include Garth Drabinsky, Sandy Pearl, Joel Michaels, Myron Gottleib, and Martin Katz? If Jews quote the Gospel, it is art, but if Mel Gibson does the same, is it anti-Semitism? The Talmudic distinction eludes me. It probably eludes most Christians too.

Arguments that Mel Gibson's movie might cause an ethnic backlash would ring truer if Jewish spokesmen had not for so long argued stridently that artistic freedom must trump all other concerns. Recall that record companies run by executives like Michael Fuchs, Gerald Levin, and David Geffen have produced many obscene records in recent years that advocated killing policemen and raping and murdering women. In spite of Congressional testimony showing that these shockingly hateful songs really did influence teenage behavior, our Jewish organizations were unconcerned. It is ignoble to loudly deplore wrongs done to us while ignoring those done to others.

Jewish hyper-sensitivity has a long and painful background of real tragedy. In the Europe of earlier eras, anti-Semitic slander frequently resulted in Catholic mobs killing Jews. But I do not believe that sad history is relevant here. If there are thugs dangerous to Jews in America today, Christianity is a cure for, not the cause of, their hostility. Jews are not attacked by Christians returning home from church on Sunday morning these days.

America is the most philo-Semitic country in history. Suggesting equivalency between American Christians today and those of Europe's past is offensive and ungrateful. If it is appropriate to blame today's American Christians for the sins of past Europeans, why isn't it okay to blame today's Jews for things that our ancestors may have done? Clearly both are wrong.

Jewish groups that fracture friendship with American Christians are harming our relationships with one of the few groups on the planet that is sympathetic toward us today. The attacks on *The Passion* are decidedly not in the interests of most American Jews who go about their daily lives in comfortable harmony with their Christian fellow citizens. Many Christians will see these attacks, with some justification in my view, as attacks against Christianity itself.

The Americans that most ardently defend Israel and denounce anti-Semitism today happen to be Christians fervently committed to their faith. Jewish interests are best served by fostering understanding with these steadfast allies. Rejecting flagrant anti-Christianism from persons who claim to be acting on behalf of Jews would be our wisest course as a community. It is also the right thing to do.

Rabbi Daniel Lapin is president of Toward Tradition, an organization dedicated to building bridges between American Jews and Christians.

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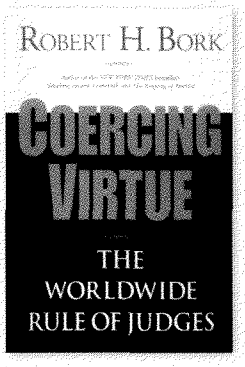

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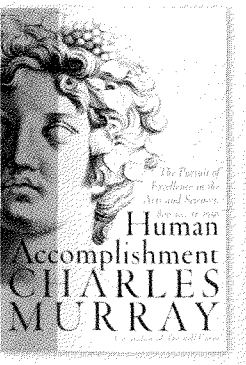

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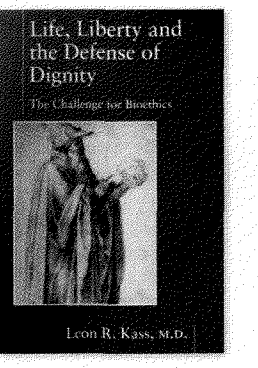

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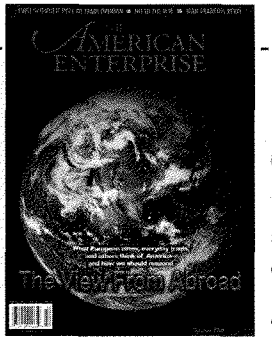

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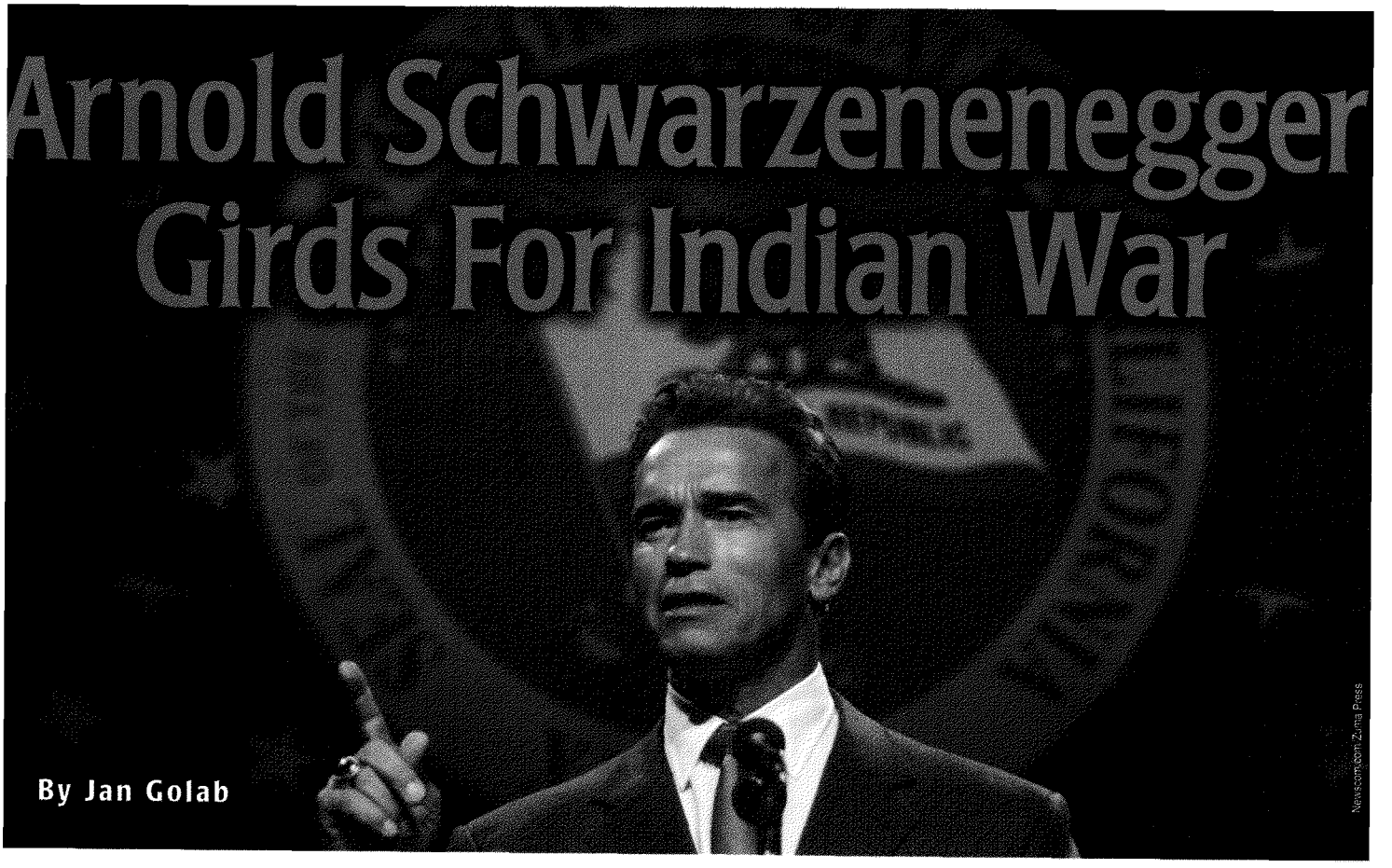
Arnold Schwarzenegger Girds For Indian War



By Jan Golab

Today's California Indians procured power the old-fashioned way: They bought the best government that money could buy. In just a few years, revenues from their newly built casinos soared to $5 billion per year (2002), pushing them close to Las Vegas ($7.7 billion) in the race for America's gambling crown. By spending a significant chunk of this money on campaign donations, a handful of small tribes have grown into the Golden State's heaviest political donors and most potent power players.

Then, The Terminator arrived. "Their casinos make billions, yet they pay no taxes and virtually nothing to the state," pronounced Arnold Schwarzenegger in one of his campaign ads. "It's time the Indians pay their fair share. All the other major candidates take their money and pander to them." He stares into the camera. He shakes his head slowly back and forth. He squints hard. "I don't play that game."

That ad was the turning point in the new governor's candidacy, causing him to surge in the polls. California citizens had watched gaming tribes spend over $120 million to push their candidates and ballot initiatives in recent years. To put that number in perspective: It's more than what George W. Bush spent nationwide to be elected President. Meanwhile, additional untold untraceable millions were donated by *individual* tribal members flush with their casino payouts. Public disgust over jackpot politics finally came to a head, and Schwarzenegger—the first politician with the courage to speak up about the Indians—rode to a resounding recall victory.

The spectacle of pay-to-play casino politics has become so egregious in California, many believe it was a deciding issue in the recall. California tribes spent more on the recall than did any other special interest. They gave $8.2 million (in direct and indirect contributions) to Democratic Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante, hoping to anoint him as ex-Governor Gray Davis' successor. They also bankrolled conservative Republican Tom McClintock for $2.5 million to help split votes away from their archenemy Schwarzenegger. A Superior Court judge eventually ruled that Bustamante illegally rerouted the Indian largesse through a side channel to avoid new spending limits, and ordered him to give the money back. By then, he had already spent it.

The high-heaven stink did not escape the public. It didn't help that Bustamante's lead campaign strategist, Richie Ross, worked for the Indian tribes, or that his younger brother Andrew was the general manager of an Indian casino near Fresno. Or that the Lt. Governor excused the Indians from his proposed $8 billion in "tough love" tax hikes to reduce the state's $38 billion deficit. "Everybody has to pay something," Bustamante proclaimed. Everybody except the Indians who gave him $8.2 million, apparently.

California writer Jan Golab has reported extensively on Indian gambling, beginning with a 1983 story in Los Angeles *magazine that was probably the first ever written on the subject.*

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Governor Gray Davis, who received more than $1 million from the tribes for his 2002 re-election, had already flamed concerns about undue Indian influence when he suddenly endorsed the "Sacred Tribal Lands" bill in 2003. The bill, which Davis had vetoed the year before, would have given Indians the power to halt development within five miles of any reservation or "sacred tribal land"—a dream for shakedown artists. In San Diego County, which has 18 Indian reservations, this legislation would have virtually usurped county authority over any new construction. As Davis became more desperate, he also promised the tribes that if he was not recalled, he would allow them to pick two new members for the Gambling Control Commission—the group that is supposed to be the watchdog over their operations.

The wild rise of Indian gambling has turned a relatively tiny number of individuals into millionaires, political rainmakers, and "sovereign nation" moguls untouchable by everyday law.

Even staunch Davis supporters were disgusted by his pandering. The governor could have extracted some form of revenue sharing when he negotiated the gambling compacts with California's Indians a few years ago, but instead he granted *all* of California gambling revenues exclusively to the 32,000 recognized tribal members in the state. Under Davis' compacts, the tribes were only required to place a total of $150 million each year into two state funds, one for non-gaming tribes, the other to mitigate the local effects on traffic, roads, police, etc., caused by tribal casinos.

California is now undergoing the fastest expansion of legal gambling in history. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Indian gambling is now "California's principal growth industry." The state will soon surpass Nevada. Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley, 120 miles east of L.A., is in the throes of a mega-resort makeover that will make it another Vegas. San Diego already has more tribal casinos (nine) than any region in the country, and six more tribes are seeking compacts. Northern California has experienced similar growth, with tribal casinos increasingly moving into urban areas via "reservation shopping."

Californians wanted somebody to pull the emergency cord on this runaway train. Schwarzenegger's internal polling told him that. And he seized the moment. He declared that 25 percent of Indian gaming revenues, over $1 billion a year, would be a "fair share" for California. It made sense to everybody but the Indians. California's tribal chairmen bristled at being branded a "special interest." They were "sovereign nations," who, by federal law, could not be taxed by states. A memo sent out by David Quintana, legal counsel for the California Nations Indian Gaming Association, declared: "This is war, we're going after Arnold Schwarzenegger." Tribal attorney Howard Dickstein told Copley News, "If Schwarzenegger wins, there will be hell to pay."

Since Schwarzenegger's win, Indian tribes across the nation have been holding their breath. Nobody seems sure what will happen next, but there is a palpable sense that the wild rise of Indian gambling—which has turned a relatively tiny number of individuals into millionaires, political rainmakers, and "sovereign nation" moguls untouchable by everyday law—may be about to undergo a change.

"The Indians prospered by spending lavishly on politics," explains veteran *Sacramento Bee* columnist Dan Walters. At the same time, their position as a preeminent "victim" group lent them "some high moral plane. That's a very difficult combination. Now, they appear to be just another special interest group. Now, the tribes have egg on their face. Not only did their guy loose, he probably lost *because* he took their money."

The looming confrontation will have national impact. Indian gaming, which only began in 1987, raked in $14.1 billion in 2002, compared to Nevada's $9.4 billion. There are now 348 Indian casinos in 30 states. California, with one fifth of the nation's gaming tribes, is merely the primary front in a national war. "California deserves its reputation as a bellwether state," the *Seattle Times* declared. "It's now leading the nation in discovering the Frankenstein's monster that many states have created when handing gaming licenses to Indian tribes."

Former California Governor Pete Wilson, who worked vigilantly to keep a lid on Indian gaming during his eight-year tenure, applauds Schwarzenegger's challenge of the tribes, which he regards as a crucial turning point. "To safeguard the public interest," says Wilson, "the governor-elect, quite rightly, made an issue of the campaign contributions to Governor Davis and Lt. Governor Bustamante and State Senator Tom McClintock. It is completely inappropriate for an aspirant to the office of governor, who is responsible for negotiating compacts with the tribes on behalf of the public, to compromise his position by becoming beholden to those parties with whom he must negotiate. It's an inherent conflict of interest."

The recall, Wilson adds, may serve as a national wake-up call. "I think a lot of people were simply stunned by the level of contributions." And California is hardly the only state where tribes have asserted their influence. Native Americans played a crucial role in the 2000 victories of Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) and Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA). They could be a deciding factor in many 2004 elections. Indian donations and activism could decide the fate of Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle in South Dakota. They could also tip the balance in the Alaska race between Republican Senator Lisa Murkowski and Democratic challenger Tony Knowles, as well as the Washington race between Democratic incumbent Patty Murray and Republican challenger George Nethercutt. Other politicians who have benefited from heavy casino support include Senators John McCain (R-AZ), Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-CO), and Daniel Inouye (D-HI).

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1987 sets forth a list of

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specific purposes for which tribal gaming revenues may be used. One of those is "to promote the economic development of the tribe." The Indians claim that campaign contributions qualify as "promoting their economic development." Critics cry foul. Congress never intended for gaming profits to be spent on partisan political campaigns, they maintain.

The unprecedented political influence of a small number of Indians is further enhanced by the exemption from campaign contribution limits that Indian tribes enjoy in the McCain-Feingold Campaign Finance Reform law. Arizona Senator John McCain, who has received more money from Indians than any other senator, created this loophole. Critics decry this as yet another illustration of how Indian money is overwhelming both political parties and corrupting our federal and state legislatures. According to *PACS & Lobbies Newsletter*, various gaming tribes represented seven of the top ten biggest "soft money" donors in the 2000 election cycle. Thanks to McCain-Feingold, they may wholly dominate the top 40 in 2004.

Once a gambling-enriched tribe acquires land, the new "reservation" becomes a sovereign nation, exempt from all American rules of due process and fair play.

Slot machines at a newly opened casino belonging to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahilla Indians in Palm Springs.

Newscom.com/LA Times

Apart from the political effects of the Indian gambling explosion, there are many social impacts. With gambling suddenly booming like never before, neither government nor the media seem willing to deal with it as a moral issue. The reports churned out by tribal PR machines about the jobs and community benefits they provide often get media coverage, while complaints about how casinos destroy lives, families, businesses, and communities rarely do.

Few independent studies have been done, but the National Gambling Impact Study Commission concluded in 1997 that when a casino opens, pathological gambling doubles within a 50 mile radius. Pathological gamblers normally comprise about 1 percent of the gambling population. Problem gamblers, whose addiction is less severe but real enough to have significant negative effects on their lives, average an additional 3 percent.

A Wisconsin study of the late 1990s concluded that for every dollar of gambling revenue garnered by the state, it spent 42 cents addressing social costs. However, gambling opponents say it's impossible to really measure the costs of lost productivity, child neglect, bankruptcy, divorce, addiction, suicide, and the myriad other social consequences of gambling. For instance, how to substantiate research by the National Conference on Problem Gambling, which suggests that one in five pathological gamblers attempts suicide? Or that proliferating casinos have also led to increased incidences of embezzlement, often by public officials?

These are hard effects to document. Most citizen action groups, therefore, end up fighting casinos over issues of environment, land use, zoning, increased street traffic, loss of trade for competing leisure businesses, and lost tax revenues.

The greatest victim may be democracy. Citizens can't vote on where an Indian casino goes or on any aspect of how it operates. Thanks to Indian claims of "national sovereignty" everything is decided by the tribes and a few Indian-affairs bureaucrats. Perhaps most worrying of all, once a gambling-enriched tribe acquires land, the new "reservation" becomes a sovereign nation, exempt from all local and state laws, zoning ordinances, labor rules, environmental reviews, and American rules of due process and fair play in law enforcement. Indians claim complete tax exemption, and thus erode the local revenue base. Some tribes pay mitigating fees, but vastly less than enough to cover the disruption, social costs, strain on fire and police protection, traffic and crime, school spending, loss of tax base, or eroding quality of life.

"Your taxes go up, not down, when an Indian casino is in your town, because tribes are exempt from local and state taxes," notes Betty Perkowski of the North Stonington Connecticut Annexation Group. "They claim they are doing their part by bringing in jobs. Well, other corporations bring in jobs too, *and* pay taxes and follow the rules everyone else must follow."

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Newscom.com/LA Times

Foxwoods in Connecticut, the largest casino in the world, has an annual gross of $1.2 billion. When it was opened by the Pequot tribe in 1992, local communities were sold on promises of economic prosperity.

But it never came. Tourists come to Foxwoods to gamble, not to patronize other local businesses. Meanwhile, traffic from 40,000 daily visitors has tied up country roads and caused houses in the area to decline sharply in value. "I've become very cynical about this operation over the past 11 years," Mayor Wesley Johnson of nearby Ledyard, Connecticut (population 15,000) told the *York County Coast Star*. "There has been no economic development spin-off from the casino."

The Supreme Court has ruled that Indians must collect sales tax from customers who are not Indians, but nearly all tribal businesses simply ignore this. And there is little states can do to enforce it because they can't sue the tribes. Indian tobacco shops, gas stations, utilities, hotels, golf courses, food services, convenience stores, etc., undercut competing businesses by not charging sales tax. This unfair competition forces closures of competing business, which the tribes then buy up themselves and reopen as Indian companies. These, in-turn, are taken off the tax rolls, which necessitates the raising of state and local taxes elsewhere.

The Oneida Nation in New York has bought 16,000 acres of land and the majority of Oneida County's gasoline and convenience stores (after driving the previous owners out of business). Mohegan Sun, Connecticut's other mega-casino, pumps 170,000 gallons a month, tax free, at their gas station. The success of tribal casinos in Oklahoma have served death warrants to hundreds of non-tribal convenience and grocery stores. According to an Oklahoma Tax Commission report, $580 million in annual sales and property taxes are now lost to Indians in that state. "Tribes in southern California are buying up as much land as they can right now," says Cheryl Schmit, director of Stand Up For California, a statewide grassroots coalition opposed to casino expansion. "They can develop small cities in these exempt areas and basically develop a tax-free cartel in any industry."

A recent study showed that New York lost as much as $895 million last year by failing to collect taxes on cigarettes sold by Indians. When Governor George Pataki tried to enforce the sales tax law, which has been upheld by the Supreme Court, tribes in upstate New York burned tires and shut down the Interstate. Pataki backed down. New York has since been forced to raise property taxes every year, as well as sin taxes, which only drove more consumers to the Indian market. Currently, several upstate governments are on the verge of bankruptcy because Indians with gambling revenues are buying lots of land and businesses in their jurisdictions and taking them off the tax rolls. The New York state legislature finally passed a law requiring wholesalers of gas and cigarettes to collect taxes on those products before delivering them to tribes. The law became effective December 1, 2003—and tribes are again threatening to shut down the Interstate.

A new Indian casino rising north of Santa Barbara.

The federal government and Indian affairs bureaucracies are ever sympathetic to the Indians; they apparently feel it is appropriate for them to "take back" whatever they can. Any pro-tribal bill that is small or incremental enough to pass under the public radar generally passes through Congress. Democratic Congressman George Miller of California succeeded in pushing through a bill that required the Secretary of the Interior to transfer title of an existing San Pablo card room to a tribe that wasn't even located in the area, thus establishing an urban casino. Many who voted for this "stealth bill" disguised as an "appropriations adjustment" had no idea what it was about or what impact it would have.

Republican Congressman John Doolittle of California slipped through a bill that required the Interior Secretary to take some Placer County land into trust for the landless Auburn Rancheria tribe. (By the way, many of the tribes establishing casinos have only dozens of members in total.) The result is Thunder Valley, near Sacramento, the prototypical urban casino and the "next phase" for Indian gaming. Located on Interstate 80, this massive casino has 2,000 slot machines. Thunder Valley may only be the beginning. "Here in California," says Cheryl Schmit, "we have tribes who are trying to move 500 miles off their established land to put a casino in a downtown location. We have a swarm of them, 23 going on right now. Twelve are clear-cut cases of reservation shopping."

Groups like the Citizens Equal Rights Alliance, United Property Owners, and One Nation have been leading a growing national resistance to expanding tribal casinos. Barb Lindsay is the executive director of United Property Owners, as well as national spokeswoman for One Nation, both national groups dedicated to the reform of federal Indian policy. Lindsay and 39 local umbrella groups helped gather signatures for the recall against Davis. She believes his sellout to the Indians motivated thousands of activists in the recall election. "Our current flawed federal Indian policy is Balkanizing America," she says. "It is causing a growing number of needless, divisive conflicts between tribes and their innocent non-Indian neighbors, eroding our state and local tax base, our property values, and our quality of life, while few Indians are seeing any economic benefit."

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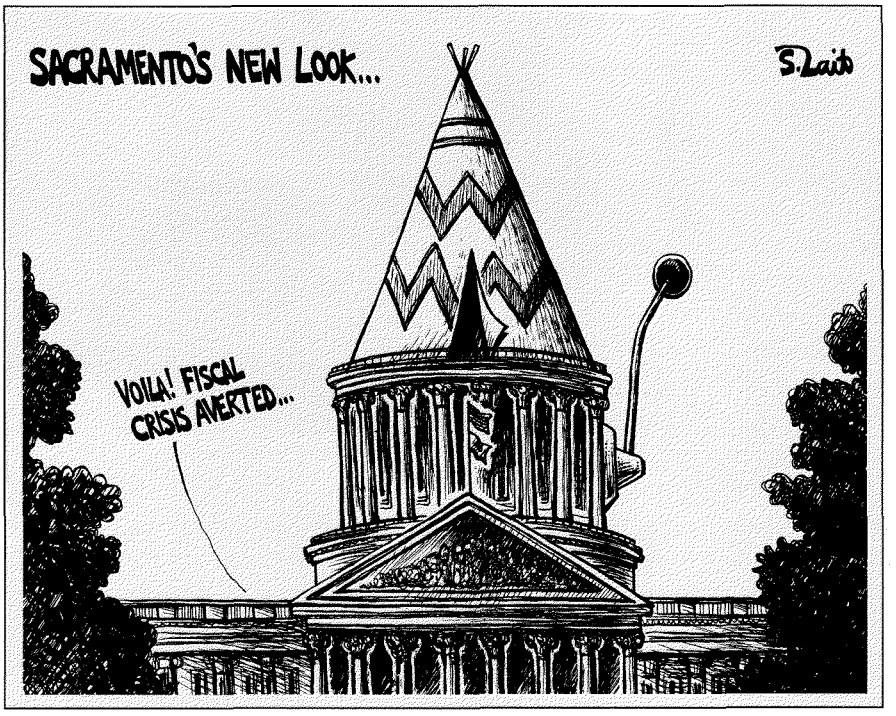

ANG Newspaper

One troubling aspect of Indian sovereignty is that tribal governments and residents can't be sued. A San Diego man crippled by a drunk driver won a judgment against an Indian who got $10,000 a month from his casino, but the injured man couldn't collect a dime. Tribal members are victims as well—they have no legal recourse against their own leaders or governments. They often don't know how much their own casinos are bringing in, because they have no sunshine laws. They don't have a free press, or secret ballot, or freedom of speech. Those who speak out often lose their jobs or homes, and can be physically ejected from the reservation. Tribal judges are not independent; they work for the tribal government.

Tribes have all the privileges of U.S. citizenship, critics say, but none of the responsibilities. Yet they continue to push the envelope for still more special privileges. One pending bill before Congress would grant virtual statehood sovereignty to America's 560 tribal reservations, expanding their jurisdiction over non-Indian business and citizens—and even municipalities—within their reservation borders. The Native Alaskan Settlement Act established several hundred tribal village governments as corporations, granting them hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of acres of land, along with job guarantees and mineral royalties in perpetuity. And those same tribes now want Congress to make them sovereign again so they can open casinos. Senator Daniel Inouye wants to pass a bill granting tribal status to all native Hawaiians, a law that would literally cleave the state and impose apartheid on non-natives.

"This issue (tribal sovereignty) is so big, we're really on the verge of a national crisis," says Barb Lindsay. "More and more innocent people are losing everything they've worked for. This issue has been simmering under the surface for years. California is a bellwether state. Now public opinion is at 'the tipping point,' where it will change quickly overnight, like an epidemic."

Lindsay recently discovered through a Freedom of Information Act request that over 200 lawsuits are pending (in 2003) in which the federal government has joined with tribes to sue local and state governments and local citizens. "We are paying for all those suits," says Lindsay, "and the tribes have initiated hundreds of other suits on their own. We are paying for them as well, through something they call a Treaty Rights Litigation Fund. Congress gives tribes millions every year, encouraging them to file lawsuits with our tax dollars."

In the long history of liberal good intentions paving a bad road, the nation's current Indian policy may win the prize. "The feds keep pushing the tribal agenda, thinking they are helping Indians, not realizing how destructive this is to the rest of us," says Lindsay. "They believe they are helping Indians by giving them all this power, but they are giving power to their leaders, without the checks and balances our Founding Fathers knew were vital. They've set the tribal members up for oppression."

Indian activists are generally unhappy with George Bush and will work hard to elect a new President. But they give plenty of money to Republicans, many of whom seem oblivious to the growing problems of tribal sovereignty. Tom McClintock, the conservative Republican who ran for governor in the California recall election, once referred to reservations as "islands of freedom." Many conservatives were stunned by the remark. Tribal governments are socialist governments with absolutist, often corrupt, leaders. Many Indian leaders admire Fidel Castro (who has won Indian praise and awards). "Indian reservations are islands of tyranny," says Barb Lindsay. "They behave like mafias, or banana republics. They've been told they are immune from federal and local laws, so they have a lawless mindset. They teach their children that they deserve special privileges because their ancestors were wronged, and that they don't have to work. Where does it all end?"

The great debate raging through Indian Country today is, "What can Arnold do?" Legally, technically, the answer is "not much." Yet many nonetheless concur: He could change everything.

Arnold wants 25 percent—more than a billion dollars a year—as a signal that Indians have obligations to society just as all other Americans do. But this must be done delicately. Tribes insist they are sovereign and, indeed, according to federal law, they are. States cannot demand any tax, assessment, or fee from the tribes. So The Terminator must persuade the tribes it is in their best interests to share $1 billion a year with the state of California.

"That's an awful lot of money," says *Sacramento Bee* columnist Dan Walters. The compacts allowing gambling in the first place, in which Gray Davis gave away the store, are good for another 17 years.

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"I'd be real surprised if they gave him 25 percent."

But the politician elected to "clean up Sacramento" has tools he can use. "He's got a lot more leverage than anyone realizes," says Barb Lindsay. Here, some observers say, is how it might go:

Many of the tribes would like to expand their operations. Their compacts limit them to 2,000 slot machines. So they are willing to re-negotiate.

"Not unless you pay your fair share."

"Then we'll wait 'til 2006 and spend $250 million to buy a new governor."

"Negative. The existing compacts have many breaches. I will shut you down. Hasta la vista, baby."

Can he do that?

Well, maybe. Many tribes are not abiding by the terms of their compacts. Some aren't putting nearly as much money into the local impact and non-gaming tribal funds as they promised, nor are they adequately mitigating "adverse off-site impacts." Few are participating in the State Workers' Comp program, nor have they adopted their own equivalent. Only one tribe has allowed its employees to unionize. At least two tribes are operating with illegal class III slot machines.

Yes, if Schwarzenegger wants to play hardball, he could close them down, or at least threaten to, and use that as leverage. The compliance clauses all contain subjective qualifiers, like "consistent with tribal needs," so tribes could appeal to the courts on some subjective basis. But if the Governator puts on the war paint, he could be a real pain in the caboose.

It would require strong political will, but the governor can appeal to the people on this subject. The history of Indian gaming has always been one of tribes defying the law then appealing to public sympathies. Many times their slot machines or outlaw construction projects were ruled unlawful, yet they got away with defying the law because whenever the authorities sent marshals to shut them down, they were portrayed as jackboots beating up on the poor, victimized Indians.

But the public mood has changed. It will change even more if Arnold takes his case to talk radio. The last thing the tribes want is growing public awareness of their "sovereignty," and the many sweet deals they've got.

"I think Arnold will play hardball" says his protégé, Pete Wilson, who was despised by the tribes for a similar toughness, which kept them at bay until the Gray Davis cave-in. But then again, Wilson opposed all gambling, not just Indian casinos, because he felt it inflicted a heavy social cost. Arnold is more libertarian. He licensed his own Terminator video slot machine. He once stated he would like to help the Indians grow from a $5 billion to a $10 billion industry—just as long as California taxpayers get their cut.

His ultimate trump card would be to tell the Indian casinos, "I will go to the people of California. I will support a ballot measure to give equal gambling rights to racetracks and others." Ethnic exclusivity was granted to Indians by ballot measure, because people saw Indians as a worthy "cause." But, increasingly, Californians see them as money players like everybody else. Their exclusive franchise could be taken away by another ballot initiative.

Tribes have all the privileges of U.S. citizenship, critics say, but none of the responsibilities.

Public opinion is shifting fast. Fifty-nine percent of the voters in Sonoma County voted for Indian gaming in 2000, but a poll taken recently by the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* shows that only 18 percent would still vote yes today. Those numbers will only grow worse as gambling proliferates. Syndicated columnist Jill Stewart notes that the public image of tribes has quickly turned from that of people who need a helping hand to "sneaky backroom players in politics who are increasingly viewed as bad neighbors."

The Indians know they've got a PR problem. That's why they've given money away to a slew of public projects. They gave a million dollars to fire relief during last fall's wildfires in Southern California. They've already tried to push a bill through Sacramento that would require any future changes in Indian law to be made by the legislature—which they can buy—so they will be immune to any future ballot measures. But that failed. Their fate remains in the hands of the people.

Perhaps reading the winds, Anthony Pico, tribal chairman of the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians in San Diego, a group that gave Bustamante $2 million, has already made a pre-emptive offer. "We will amend our current compact with the state," he wrote in an open letter to the new governor, "to adjust our contribution to [be] the same rate which every corporation pays in California state taxes.... We will match what every business enterprise contributes, not as a tax, but as our government contribution under the tribal state compact." In return, Pico asked the governor to remove restrictions on the growth of Indian gambling.

But the public is showing signs of resistance to further expansion, and Arnold, after all, is The People's governor. What will he do? Cheryl Schmit of Stand Up For California is one of a number of activists who have been suggested as a possible adviser for the new governor on Indian affairs. Whoever gets tapped for that role will face a daunting task, says Schmit. "Right now there are 65 compacts, which would have to be renegotiated. And 30 more tribes are lined up and waiting."

Schmit says the governor could start by seeking a new template agreement, which could then be customized slightly for each tribe. It would require some challenging negotiation, as not all tribes are alike. "Some Indians are militant 'sovereignty fundamentalists,'" says Schmit. "Others see gaming more as a business opportunity and strive to get along with their community, rather than battle with it. But whatever the new governor is able to accomplish here in California, it is going to be the trend."

Already sensing a profound change in public mood, a consortium of card rooms and race tracks announced, just four

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The Problem Behind CHINESE ADOPTIONS

BY BRIAN CONNELLY

The People's Republic of China's trade surplus with the United States approached $100 billion in fiscal year 2002. But the most significant and permanent Chinese export to the United States is not counted in dollars: Over the last decade, more than 30,000 Chinese children, the vast majority of them girls, have been adopted by American parents.

The flow dipped when China temporarily suspended adoptions last May due to the SARS outbreak. But in 2002, the INS processed 5,053 immigrant visas for children adopted from China, nearly 1,000 more than from Russia, and over twice as many as other large groups of adoptees from countries like Guatemala, South Korea, and Vietnam.

There is a uniquely cruel reality behind the Chinese adoptions. These girls do not need to be adopted because of poverty. Rather, they have been made expendable by deliberate government policy: the "one child" law maintained by the Chinese Communist Party which limits Chinese couples to a single baby in order to force population reduction.

The Chinese government enforces the one-child policy through heavy fines, pressure from employers and communist officials, and other means. Human rights activists have documented forced abortions and sterilizations, even infanticide. And in combination with ingrained cultural preferences for male children in China, the one-child policy has created a wave of abandoned girls in orphanages, as families get rid of "illegal" girls so that they can fill their one-child quota with a son.

Why have outsiders reacted to China's harsh one-child rules so blithely? Some Westerners say the Chinese government cannot be dissuaded on this point, so they don't even try. But China's actions amidst the 2003 SARS outbreak suggest the government may be more susceptible to outside pressure than some imagine.

When the SARS epidemic swept China, the government first denied its existence, then denied its true scope. Officials intentionally deceived and obfuscated. It was not public health concerns, but the Communist Party's obsession with China's world image that drove its policies.

But as hints of what was going on in China trickled out, there was unprecedented scrutiny and criticism of Chinese SARS policies by foreigners, including the World Health Organization. When it was no longer possible to hide the epidemic, China finally responded to the public relations crisis with an announcement of draconian measures to combat the spread of SARS, including widespread quarantines, and the death penalty for knowingly spreading the disease.

Even then, politics remained paramount: Despite the outbreak of SARS in Taiwan, China continued to fight the inclusion of Taiwan in the World Health Organization. But China realized it could not defy world opinion indefinitely.

The difference between SARS and the one-child policy is that the world cares about SARS because it affects people outside of China. SARS shone an unattractive international light on the Chinese Communist Party. But the coercive one-child policy (and many other domestic crimes by the party) have been there for the world to observe for many years. Many foreign governments have simply decided to turn a blind eye.

The one-child policy was enacted in 1979 under Deng Xiaoping. As China's economy developed throughout the 1980s and '90s, the enforcement of the one-child law actually became stricter. Despite periodic speculation that China might scrap the policy, the Communist Party Central Committee affirmed in 2001 that it was happy with the policy and intended to leave it in force.

Adam Pertman, director of the Donaldson Adoption Institute in New York, describes the link between Chinese adoptions and the one-child policy as "pretty direct." He says that "the policy certainly causes the majority of the abandonment of little girls. In some countries, adoptions are caused by an economic policy. In Guatemala, it was a civil war. A policy such as China's is certainly unique."

Kay Johnson of Hampshire College in Massachusetts has studied abandoned children in China since the mid 1990s. Herself the adoptive mother of a Chinese girl, Johnson says that virtually all the abandoned Chinese girls she investigated were due to the government's rule: "The heart of the problem is the one-child policy."

Some Chinese dissidents argue that the foreign adoptions are not only a consequence of the one-child policy, but a motivation to keep it in place. Harry Wu spent 19 years in a Chinese *laogai* forced labor camp and now publicizes Chinese human rights abuses through the Washington-based Laogai Research Foundation. Wu

Brian Connelly is a writer living in Pittsburgh.

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says bluntly, "China is exporting orphans to make money."

Wu makes the case that the adoption costs paid by Westerners add up to significant money for the Chinese government, ticking off the plane tickets, documents, fees to middlemen, and direct payments to the Chinese government. Wu also questions the donations to orphanages that families with adopted children are encouraged to make after their return to the United States. "The orphanages are government businesses," Wu says—and now money-making ones, because their budgets, he charges, are less than the fees paid by American parents.

Johnson disputes this. She says that "much more money ends up in the hands of Americans," citing plane tickets, fees paid to American adoption services, and the $1,000 to the INS for an adopted child's visa and passport. "Economics is not a motivation," she argues.

Rather, Johnson says, the Chinese government has an absolute moral certainty that the one-child policy is a modernizing force. Western population control advocates like the Ford Foundation have actually encouraged China in maintaining its policy, she notes. But while Wu's economic charge may not hold up, his central observation is indisputable: "Giving birth is a fundamental human right. In China the government controls it."

At the Massachusetts adoptive-parents organization Families with Children, Shantih Fry asks for sensitivity to the situations of the adoptive families. "Whatever is behind a child being separated from parents, it is never a pretty story. It is always a tough situation." But in the case of the abandoned Chinese girls, this tough situation is entirely created, maintained, and defended by the Chinese government.

A dynamic develops in the stories of many of the adoptive parents: Their desire to shelter their children from prejudice and to promote their Chinese heritage can subtly blend into the role of defending the Chinese government. Like China's government, many parents and adoption groups avoid discussing the one-child policy, partly because they want to maintain amicable relations with the Chinese government. But is that getting too close to putting a happy face on Chinese communist oppression?

There is an extensive literature now on Chinese adoptions in the United States. Yet very few writers draw the connection between the overseas adoption flow and the ban on second children that Chinese couples face. America's pro-life activists have been one of the only organized groups to give attention to this subject.

Many of the American communities in which adopted Chinese girls are becoming a recognizable demographic are university towns or cities. Older childless professionals, including some single parents and gays and lesbians, are heavily represented among the adopters. In this population there has been no groundswell against the government pressures that are giving rise to the abandonment of so many little girls in China in the first place.

Undeniably, the Westerners who adopt the girls save them from a harsh life. And the adopted Chinese children bring joy to their new parents. Their presence in American schools and communities encourages generous rethinking of ideas about race and family. If the numbers of adoptees from China continue at current levels, Chinese girls with American parents will make up a noticeable slice of the upper middle class population in many parts of the country.

While there is little prospect for an end to the one-child law under China's current government, many do see hope that the adopted girls may one day find their birth mothers. American parents of this wave of adopted Chinese girls emphasize their children's Chinese heritage and remind their children that they have a family in China. Children's books like *Mommy Far, Mommy Near* and contacts with other adopted Chinese children keep the idea alive.

Kay Johnson believes that Westerners must encourage Chinese leaders to abandon their Malthusian notion that a growing population is a threat to the country, even with a modernizing economy. For, ultimately, as she puts it: "There is no humane way to have a one-child policy." Shouldn't Americans be concerned with policies that warp Chinese lives in ways that any American would find profoundly objectionable in his or her own life—or should we care only about issues like SARS that could hurt us?

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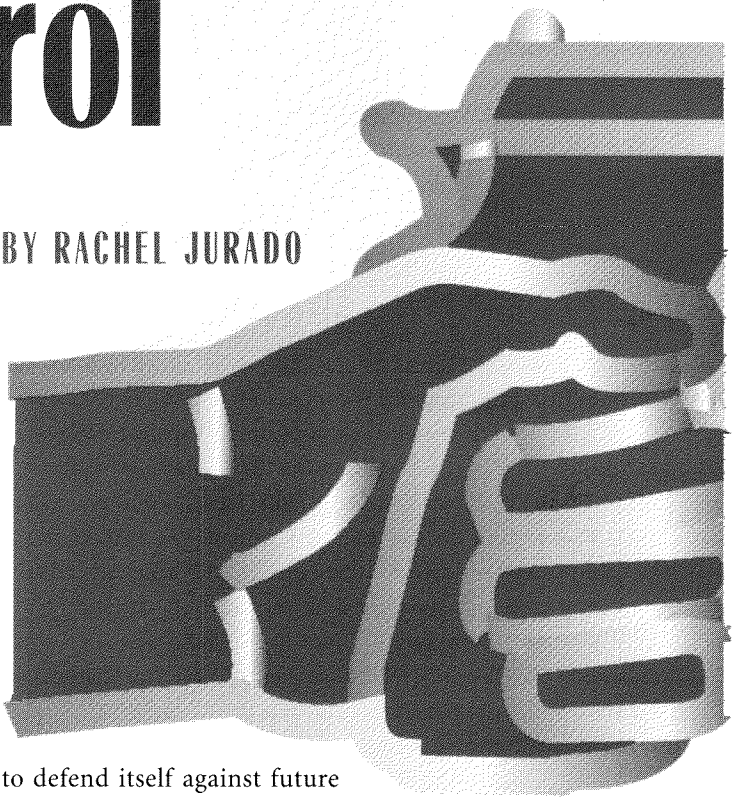
Gun Control Victims

BY RACHEL JURADO



In the middle of a long drive through rural Texas in the early 1960s, Evelyn Logan pulled over at a rest stop at 5:30 a.m. to take a break. As she emerged from the public bathroom, a man ambushed her, grabbed her by the hair, and dragged her toward the nearby woods. All Evelyn could do at first was scream for help—as she had five years earlier when she was raped in an airport parking garage.

But then she reached into her purse for the .22 handgun she kept there. She shot at the ground in front of her. The shock of the explosion allowed her to free herself from her attacker's grasp and take control of the situation. She forced him to lie prostrate on the ground next to the main road and then waited for someone to stop and help. Eventually, some policemen, who were patrolling the area for a serial rapist, pulled into the rest stop and arrested their man.

These traumatic events led Evelyn to her life's work: instructing women on the defensive use of firearms, as well as other methods of self-defense. "I am a rape survivor, and a rape-attempt survivor," she tells students. "The difference is, the second time I had a gun." Logan also serves as coordinator of the New Hampshire branch of the Second Amendment Sisters, a group of women opposed to gun control laws.

Although proponents claim that gun control laws help everyone, they may actually result in increased exposure to crime and violence for the most vulnerable members of society. The very first nationwide gun control efforts began in Nazi Germany and preceded Adolf Hitler's incapacitation and eventual murder of millions of citizens deemed "undesirable."

The Nazis started with benign anti-gun laws aimed at fighting gang violence. Then the controls were extended. The day after the infamous *Kristallnacht* rampages, Berlin's police president Wolf Heinrich von Helldorf boasted that the Jewish population of Berlin had been completely disarmed in the weeks preceding the event. All told, the police confiscated 1,702 guns, 20,000 rounds of ammunition, and 2,569 other small weapons from Jews. The next day, von Helldorf warned that any Jews with unlicensed weapons would face "the severest punishment."

An armed Jewish population could have done much more to defend itself against future horrors. During the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, a small group of freedom fighters using improvised weapons and a few smuggled guns managed to put up stiff resistance for nearly a month. With a greater arsenal, Europe's Jews might have been able to fight a full-fledged guerilla war against the Nazis.

This narrative is, of course, very familiar to Second Amendment advocates, who often cite it as the clearest case of what can happen when a citizenry allows itself to be disarmed by its government. Much closer to home, however, is a cautionary tale from America's own history: the post-Civil War South. During Reconstruction, Negro militias were established in several states, but during the Jim Crow era that followed, state lawmakers used our country's first gun control laws and registration requirements to disarm blacks physically and, by extension, politically.

Today's gun control movement sidesteps any acknowledgement of the political repercussions of current and past gun control policies. Senator Dianne Feinstein states simply that, "Banning guns addresses a fundamental right of Americans to feel safe." Unfortunately this bit of high-minded rhetoric masks an important shift of power from citizens to government authorities. Moreover, such a policy would victimize individuals who, like Evelyn Logan, would be left with no means to defend themselves.

Rachel Jurado is a TAE *intern, a student at George Washington University, and a shooting sports enthusiast.*

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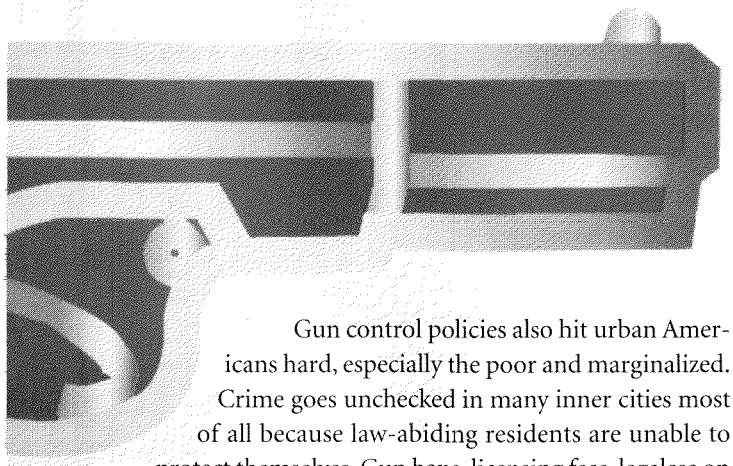
Women receive little encouragement for self-defense from mainstream feminists.



Gun control policies also hit urban Americans hard, especially the poor and marginalized. Crime goes unchecked in many inner cities most of all because law-abiding residents are unable to protect themselves. Gun bans, licensing fees, legalese on application forms, and so forth make it impossible for many city dwellers to own a gun for self-defense. Take Ronald Dixon.

Unlike many of the most vocal gun control advocates, Dixon did not have bodyguards, high-priced lawyers, or celebrity status to protect him, so he bought a gun in Florida from a licensed firearms dealer. When he moved to Brooklyn in 2002, Dixon was required to obtain a gun license. Because of the legal hoopla involved, he paid a company $550 to process the paperwork for him.

Soon after, on the morning of December 14, Dixon watched from his bedroom as a complete stranger walked blithely past his door and down the hall. He grabbed his gun and followed the man, only to find him in his son's room rifling through the drawers. Dixon warned the man to leave; the burglar attacked, and Dixon was forced to shoot him. Things only became more complicated after the shooting. The registration process for the gun was not yet complete when the incident occurred, and so Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes (who once let a woman who scalded her daughter to death get off without being charged) slapped Dixon with a misdemeanor for illegal gun possession and proposed a four-week jail sentence. Eventually Hynes reduced the charge to disorderly conduct, and in June 2003, Dixon spent a day in the same jail as his burglar, Ivan Thompson.

Though liberal interest groups like the NAACP, the National Organization for Women, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Discrimination, and the Anti-Defamation League have strong anti-gun platforms, the historical reality is that African Americans, women, homosexuals, and Jews have suffered physically and politically in the past because of their inability to protect themselves. Recognizing this, grassroots groups like the Second Amendment Sisters, Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership, and the Pink Pistols have sprung up to promote and protect the rights of ownership and the safe use of firearms for members of historically oppressed groups.

Kenneth Blanchard, a black preacher and Second Amendment activist, says that the NAACP "sold us out" in order to curry political favor with other activist groups on the left, for whom gun control is a kind of gospel. Too many blacks have let their Second Amendment rights slip away, following instead a "mentality that prefers comfort to freedom"—that prefers passive reliance on others to ensure one's own safety. Blanchard has worked since 1991 to promote gun ownership and education among blacks. He founded a shooting club for blacks named after the Buffalo soldiers of the U.S. Army: the Tenth Cavalry Gun Club.

The first chapter of the Pink Pistols, a gay pro-gun group, was formed in 1993. Since then 37 chapters have formed in 28 states. The group gained notoriety in 1998 when one of its Massachusetts chapters ardently criticized gay State Senator Cheryl Jacques (D) for sponsoring a strict anti-gun bill that eventually passed in the statehouse. The bill amended state gun licensing laws such that the power to decide which citizens could obtain licenses lay solely in the hands of district police chiefs. The group challenged Jacques to view the bill as one that would negatively affect marginalized groups. Under the measure, Pink Pistols spokesman David Rostcheck complained, "[a] police chief can deny a license to a legally qualified person based on their gender, their housing, their sexual orientation—absolutely anything they want."

Second Amendment groups have recognized the growing interest of women in gun ownership and have begun to cater to their specific needs with women's training classes, hunting trips, and shooting sports competitions. Most female gun owners want guns for self-defense, however. A number of organizations were formed in response to the hysterics of the Million Mom March in 2000. The Liberty Belles, Armed Females of America, and Women Against Gun Control have joined the Second Amendment Sisters in a coalition that seeks to educate women about the usefulness of guns as a means of self-defense, while encouraging women to become skilled enough with handguns so they can qualify for concealed-carry permits.

Women receive little encouragement for self-defense from mainstream feminists. When asked about the growing interest of women in the defensive use of firearms, Betty Friedan, the grandmother of modern feminism, called it "a horrifying, obscene perversion of feminism." On the religious Left, the Reverend Allen Brockway of the United Methodist Church has written, "Rather than shooting rapists, it is women's Christian duty to submit to rape." More and more women are choosing to ignore such counsel, though, and instead are acquiring the means to protect themselves.

What unites many minority gun groups in defense of the Second Amendment is that they are not willing to passively place their lives in the hands of the government, particularly given the state's inability to protect the rights of all people at all times in all places. Yes, human beings have a right to "feel safe," and an unalienable right to life. And the best way to ensure those rights is often to entrust individuals to provide for their own defense.

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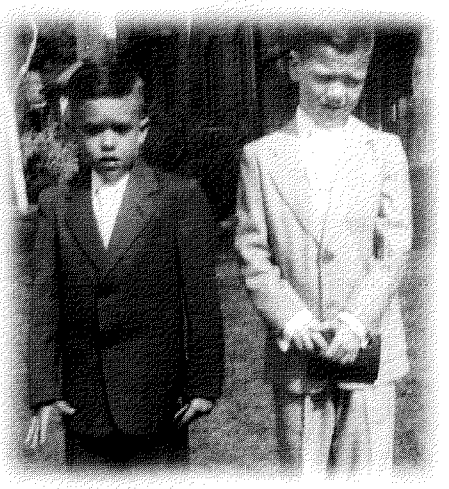
The Gift of Life

By Robert Cheeks



Robert Cheeks, right, and his rescuer Bruce Smith, on the occasion of their First Communion at St. Aloysius Church, East Liverpool, Ohio.

East Liverpool, Ohio—In the 1950s, my family lived amidst a mix of Irish, Italian, English, German, Jewish, Greek, and Ukranian families. It was a decidedly working class neighborhood that provided a labor pool for the local potteries, steel mills, and associated businesses of the upper Ohio Valley.

My favorite pal among the horde of children in the locale was Bruce Smith.

We hit it off right away as five-year-olds. Smitty was the kid who got straight A's without any significant exertion, understood fractions, read all the Hardy Boys mysteries, and was talented with his hands.

While I spastically smeared glue on my scale models of Sherman tanks and Nazi fighter planes, he was altering the plastic bodies of his car kits to make the doors swing open and the steering wheel turn.

Bruce laid out a scale model of the Pittsburgh Pirate's Forbes Field in the basement of his house; complete with a carved wooden bat that pivoted on the floor thanks to rubber bands and springs. There were baselines, a painted infield and outfield, and bricks representing infielders and baskets standing in for outfielders. All you needed was a marble and you were in business for hours.

St. Aloysius Catholic Church and School was the center of our little universe. We were altar boys, choir boys, and Boy Scouts. We usually got stuck serving at the funerals, because the older kids took the weddings (which inevitably resulted in a tip from the best man). I didn't mind, though, because the local funeral director, Frank Dawson, always had a joke to tell or some sage advice to offer on the way to the cemetery.

My favorite time of year was Advent, when on Friday afternoons the different grades would pack the stairwells of our school and sing Christmas hymns. If the nuns and priests at St. Aloysius taught us anything—and they taught us a great many things—it was just how precious life is. Some of us, however, had to learn that lesson the hard way.

It was in February of 1956 when Smitty and I found ourselves bundled for the single-digit weather and sledding on the Seventh Street hill. After four or five trips down the speedy run we rested near the small stream known locally as "Stink Creek." There had been a thaw the previous week, resulting in a rather impressive flood along the flats adjoining the creek, and when the weather turned cold the entire expanse froze in crystalline majesty.

I trekked out onto the ice and stamped my foot. "Solid as a rock," I pronounced. Just then there was a loud crack, and the ice parted. I was instantly engulfed in an unimaginable terror. As I fell through I managed a "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph." And then everything turned milky gray.

Weighed down as I was with a winter coat, scarf, hat with ear flaps, two pairs of pants, woolen mittens, and buckled calf length rubber boots, I should have dropped right to the bottom of the creek. But the current was so swift, instead of descending I darted downstream...under the ice!

As I rose I struck solid ice. I opened my eyes and looked into the murky water all around me. As I rose again I thrust upward, and my head struck ice again. This time, fortunately, I broke through. My depleted lungs sucked in great volumes of sweet air.

At just that critical moment a large tree limb slapped down in front of my face. It was Smitty.

When I hadn't surfaced, he followed along the bank of the creek, picking up a fallen tree limb as he went, and when I finally burst through the ice he was there with his life pole. After a great deal of exertion, he pulled me out of the water and across the ice to the shore.

Ten-year-old Bruce Edward Daniel Smith had saved my life with his quick thinking, stalwart determination, and courage.

"Thanks Smitty," was all I could say. "Yeah," he said, "...it's ok."

Neither of us said much after that as we walked home.

I have always hoped that someday I might repay my old friend. But there are some debts that simply can't be repaid.

Robert Cheeks writes frequently on American life from Ohio.

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The Soros Threat

George Soros

Newscom.com/Agence France Presse

By James Glassman

George Soros, the 38th richest person in the world according to *Forbes*, says that defeating President George W. Bush in 2004 is "the central focus of my life." In an eye-popping interview recently with the *Washington Post*, he argued that "America under Bush is a danger to the world."

"When I hear Bush say, 'You're either with us or against us,' it reminds me of the Germans." It evokes memories, he says, of the Nazi rhetoric of his childhood in Hungary.

This wild antipathy toward the President is making Soros—who earned his $7 billion as a hedge-fund buccaneer—the single biggest funder of efforts to get Bush out of the White House. The *Post* figures he has spent over $15 million so far, and he is ready to give more. The 2004 Presidential race, he told the *Post*, is "a matter of life and death."

In early November, Soros and a partner donated $5 million to the liberal, anti-Bush MoveOn.org. He also gave $10 million to a similar organization, America Coming Together, which aims to mobilize voters in 17 battleground states. And he has promised $3 million to the Center for American Progress, a new Democratic think tank started by former Clinton aide John Podesta.

Soros has always fancied himself an intellectual as well as a moneymaker, and he wants desperately to be taken seriously. His first attempt came in 1997 with a weird, discursive article in the *Atlantic Monthly* called "The Capitalist Threat." He argued that "the spread of market values into all areas of life" is now the main threat to "open and democratic society."

The man-bites-dog nature of the anti-capitalist article from the capitalist mogul brought it attention, but it was so appallingly stupid that it provoked the ire of even the typically mild-mannered, centrist journalist Robert Samuelson of *Newsweek*. He called Soros "a crackpot" and his essay "gibberish" akin to the "Unabomber's manifesto in its sweeping, unsupported, and disconnected generalizations."

Now Soros is back in the *Atlantic* with a piece called "The Bubble of American Supremacy." Here the problem is not so much incoherence as hysteria: "The Bush administration proceeded to exploit the terrorist attack for its own purposes," he writes of the 9/11 terrorist murder of innocents. "It fostered the fear that has gripped the country…and it used the war on terrorism to execute an agenda of American supremacy."

What does Soros propose? Not military action, but "preventive action of a constructive and affirmative nature. Increased foreign aid or better or fairer trade rules," and, of course, "international cooperation."

All of this would be harmless if Soros didn't have billions to spend and the intention to manipulate our politics with them. In the past, it was enough for him to lavish money on leftish causes like drug legalization through the Soros Foundations Network. But a more strident, ideological tone has now become evident.

Soros dubbed his main charity the "Open Society Institute," a reference to the 1945 book, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, by Karl Popper (1902-94), who was driven out of his native Austria by the Nazis. Popper's ideas are complicated, but he stood for what Jonathan Rauch, in a perceptive essay following 9/11, called a free society's "irrepressible effervescence and astonishing durability." These truly are American traits, and ones that the Bush administration has tried to preserve and promote through the kinds of activities that Soros appears to detest: tax cuts, regulatory restraint, and yes, overthrowing tyrants in other parts of the world.

There is irony in Soros's simultaneous embrace of Popper and of the American Left. And hypocrisy in his attitude toward campaign finance regulation: In his foundation's annual report, Soros lauds the McCain-Feingold law limiting donations as an antidote to "a fundamental crisis in democratic self-government." Yet he pours millions into a loophole that lets non-party groups accept funds without limit.

Let me be clear: Soros earned his money, and he can spend it on whatever he wants. What concerns me is the monstrous hatred Soros has developed toward the President of the United States—hatred shared by others in his social circle.

My guess is that the $15 million Soros has spent is just the beginning. Most voters are blessedly immune to dumb arguments even when they are well-funded. Nevertheless, it would be foolish to take Soros lightly. He is emerging as a great threat not just to the re-election of George Bush, but to our truly open society as well.

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Loud Cat

Universal Pictures/Image net

By Josh Larsen

Among its many annoying aspects, political correctness tends to put a damper on the joy that comes with revisiting old literary classics.

A corrective impulse ruined the 2000 film version of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, which twisted the Dr. Seuss story by making the Grinch a victim and the Whos materialistic meanies. (I much prefer author Theodor Geisel's explanation for the Grinch's grumpiness: "His heart was two sizes too small.")

And so it was with great trepidation that I settled in for Dr. Seuss's *The Cat in the Hat*, another big-budget Seuss adaptation from *Grinch* producer Brian Grazer. All signs pointed in the wrong direction. The television commercials, for instance, made *Cat* look bloated, manic, and antithetical to Geisel's gentle spirit.

Well, if *Grinch* sent the late author spinning in his grave, *Cat* should at least slow down the rate at which he's rotating. At 82 minutes, the film hardly counts as a meticulously faithful adaptation. At the least, it doesn't betray its source material's essence in the name of political correctness.

The film version of *The Cat in the Hat* is wild and anarchic, sometimes too much for its own good, but it's worth remembering that some people said the same of Geisel's 1957 written version when it nudged aside Dick and Jane in the world of children's literature. An ode to mischief-making, particularly the sort that can only be done when your mother is out, the story celebrates the impish creativity of youth—in which imagination and a little rule-breaking can salvage a rainy day.

Under Grazer's leadership, the filmmakers could easily have spun this into a modern cautionary tale. If the movie had gone the way of *Grinch*, the troublemaking brother and sister would have been taken by a social worker to counseling, and the Cat would have been neutered. Instead, first-time director Bo Welch, whose background is as a production designer on such films as *Edward Scissorhands* and *Men in Black*, dives head-first into the naughtiness. The Cat's first act is to do what the brother had earlier been scolded for—sliding on a tray down the stairs.

The writers might have shown some restraint. The pervasive blue humor, mostly from the mouth of comedian Mike Myers as the Cat, is a glaring weakness. There are also numerous double entendres that flirt with a PG-13 rating. Yet I'd rather they went overboard in conjuring up pandemonium than try to "correct" the book's mischievous tone.

Even the additions the filmmakers make feel plausible in this topsy-turvy world. We see much more of the siblings' mother (Kelly Preston) on film than we do in the book. A single mom who works as a realtor, she's preparing a party at her home for her clients, which adds consequence to the mess that her children make of the place when the Cat arrives.

There's also a villain of sorts in the duplicitous next-door neighbor (Alec Baldwin) who's wooing the mom, and a comic foil in a babysitter named Mrs. Kwan (Amy Hill) who sleeps through all of the Cat's chaos.

The character of Mrs. Kwan brings us to the subject of responses to the film by reviewers—which were mostly livid. Among the critics' charges was that *The Cat in the Hat* is—yes—politically incorrect ("insensitive") in portraying an Asian character in a demeaning way. In truth, Mrs. Kwan's ethnicity has little or nothing to do with what happens to her. What's more, if a white actress had played the role, these same critics would have accused the movie of lacking diversity.

The larger critical problem, however, was that reviewers couldn't get the taste of *Grinch* out of their mouths. Their lack of enthusiasm for a Seuss sequel is understandable given what we got in installment No. 1. But reviewers' unwillingness to give this movie anything resembling a chance is blatantly unprofessional. Nearly every *Cat* review read as if it had been written weeks before the author had seen the movie.

Am I claiming *The Cat in the Hat* is a modern children's classic? Hardly. It's far too crude for such status, and the last-minute attempt to slap on a moral doesn't fit with a light-hearted story that teaches kids little more than to clean up their rooms. I'll take the book over the film in a heartbeat. But for a family movie around the holidays, you could do worse. Witness *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

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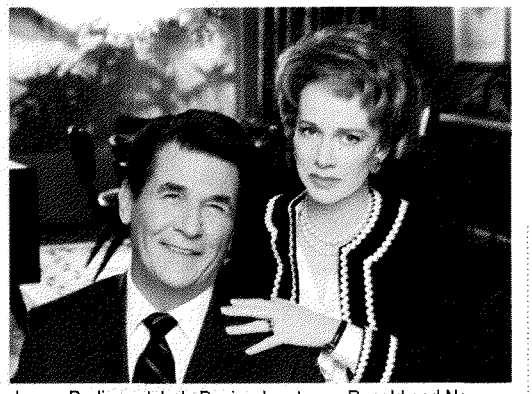
Beat the Press

The hand that rules the press…rules the country—Judge Learned Hand

The People Speak

By Chris Weinkopf



James Brolin and Judy Davis who star as Ronald and Nancy Reagan in the new miniseries "The Reagans."

Katie Couric couldn't believe it. Bowing to public pressure, CBS had just pulled the plug on "The Reagans," its $9 million doomed foray into non-reality TV. The decision was such big news that even rival networks were dissecting it, and NBC's sprightly "Today" hostess pronounced herself simply astonished by "all this brouhaha."

"I don't think I've ever seen anything quite like this," she sniffed, echoing a sentiment expressed widely throughout much of the media: This was something new, something big, something hitherto unimaginable—audiences getting riled up about the entertainment media, and media mucky-mucks buckling under.

But if Couric and company had never seen anything like this, it could only be because they weren't paying attention. After all, this is America, home of the perpetually outraged. We do this sort of thing all the time.

Jewish activists have waged a preemptive war against Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. Gay activists fought to get Dr. Laura off TV. Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton tried to edit jokes about Rosa Parks out of the home-video versions of *Barbershop*.

Protesting the media is a national, bipartisan pastime, the peculiar ritual by which modern American society defines its ever-shifting boundary between good and bad taste. It's also a democratic process, which is why PETA's protests against California's "happy cows" ad campaign has largely gone ignored, and why public disgust with Bill Maher led to ABC's termination of his show "Politically Incorrect." More often than not, majority sentiment wins out.

It may not all be healthy, but it's certainly not new. For better or for worse, it's the American way. Yet to hear various establishment media organs tell it, the effort on the part of ordinary citizens to block CBS' artless smear of a beloved President suffering from Alzheimer's disease is more like something out of the old USSR—literally.

The *New York Times* editorial page, which condescendingly noted that Reagan's "supporters credit him with forcing down the Iron Curtain"—as opposed to acknowledging that the former President might actually have played a role in bringing about that happy event—described it as "odd that some of [his fans] have helped create the Soviet-style chill embedded in the idea that we as a nation will not allow critical portrayals of one of our recent leaders."

PBS' Bill Moyers likened the episode to a natural disaster, and the end of artistic freedom as we know it. "You might wonder if the slight tremor that ran through the First Amendment might be a precursor to greater earthquakes yet to come when the stakes are really high," he warned.

Paul Begala of CNN's "Crossfire" was the most direct. "The right wing has a new favorite weapon: censorship," Begala thundered. And, "It's censorship by an organized right-wing group of thugs that doesn't want free speech."

But if the Right is trying to censor critical discussions of Ronald Reagan, it has failed rather spectacularly. This latest episode was marked by weeks of renewed criticism of the Gipper's Presidency, with talk show critics explaining why this or that dig in the program's script really was accurate—Nancy *did* call the shots, Ron *was* a nincompoop, he *did* cause the AIDS epidemic, and so on. The controversy gave priceless hours of free publicity to a program that will still be aired on Showtime, which reaches tens of millions of Americans in their living rooms. The Soviet censors would be unimpressed.

And contrary to claims that CBS succumbed to "right-wing pressure," it was a broad population that took offense to this program. It's not the affection of Republican activists alone that explains Reagan's enduring, near-iconic popularity. The shock that hit CBS was the realization that, lo and behold, the values, prejudices, and attitudes of TV producers aren't held by the majority of the American people. In a country where boycotts are threatened almost daily, this one stuck.

Far from being a case of censorship, the battle over "The Reagans" was a classic democratic argument—which the media elites lost.

Chris Weinkopf is editorial page editor at the L.A. Daily News.

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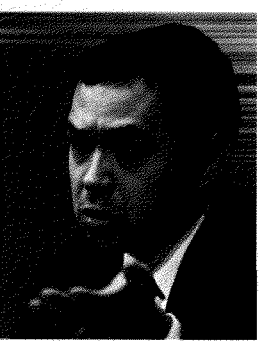
Use the Bush Failures



Miguel Estrada, repeatedly rejected by Senate Democrats as a Bush-appointed Hispanic judge.

Newscom.com/KRT

By Grover Norquist

If President George W. Bush is to win re-election with a mandate, he needs to focus more public attention on his failures.

The temptation for all Presidents and governors running for re-election is to dwell on their accomplishments. A President's campaign staff wants to argue that every challenge has been met, every promise kept, and numerous successes have been racked up.

George Bush Sr. was proud of his record of never having his veto overriden by Congress. He signed and approved every piece of legislation from 1989-92. His White House staff thought this was an asset. On an "Inside the Beltway" scorecard, he had all wins, no losses. But he also had no public record of opposition to any law, tax, or regulation in existence. He became Mr. Status Quo. Yet in November 1992, with a weak economy, the status quo was unacceptable to many voters.

Thanks to the tax cuts championed by his son President George W. Bush in 2001, 2002, and 2003, our economy is now growing—more than 7 percent in the third quarter of 2003. It would be easy and fun to campaign on this record.

But even if growth continues strongly through 2004, there will be pockets of stagnation and downturn. Democrats are already focusing on the manufacturing employment numbers. Back in 1984, Democrats attacked Reagan's job creation boom by falsely claiming that all the new jobs were for hamburger flippers, and that the economic recovery did not extend into our heartland.

President Bush should remind people that none of his tax cuts passed as he wanted them; all were watered down, delayed, made temporary. The Senate only allowed President Bush to cut the double taxation of dividend income in half rather than eliminate it. The death tax repeal and marriage penalty reduction are phased in, and are only temporary.

Should the economy slow in 2004, or employment growth lag in the manufacturing sector, the American people need to know that the Democrats defeated Bush's efforts to make tax cuts larger and permanent. It is understandable that advisers would suggest that President Bush push for a small tax cut in 2004 to maintain his "tax cut every year" record without engendering massive Democratic opposition. But a wiser move would be to design a larger tax cut targeted for manufacturing. Let the Democratic Party leadership decide if it wants to oppose a pro-jobs, pro-manufacturing stimulus.

An incumbent who is honest about his failures and frustrations is insulated from criticisms of the status quo. Reminding voters where he has been blocked is also a good way of making sure the 2004 election is not just a popularity contest or a thank-you-for-a-job-well-done, but also a mandate for future progress in a second administration.

Ronald Reagan ran for re-election in 1984 with a record of tremendous success: inflation down from double digits, 4 million new jobs created in 1983 alone, Grenada liberated, tax rates cut 25 percent across the board. He ran on the slogan, "Morning in America," and he was able to defeat Walter Mondale. But with this "mission accomplished" strategy Reagan failed to win a mandate for his second term.

President Bush should highlight the Senate Democrats' filibustering of judicial nominees, and their stymieing of tort reform. He should make a strong case that a second term for him, working with more Republican Senators, would be an agenda worth voting for.

Of course the kind of folks who get their news from cable networks like CNN, MSNBC, and FOX News already know that President Bush has fought hard for meaningful tort reform and for his judicial nominees. That accounts for 33 percent of Americans. But most Americans follow politics as if overhearing an argument conducted in a foreign language from across a crowded restaurant. It is hard to get the attention of voters who have real lives to run and choose not to study the news all day. They need to be reminded of what the Senate was doing while they were watching the World Series.

A successful 2004 election will be one that gives President Bush not just a second term but also a meaningful mandate, as well as larger majorities in both houses of Congress. The recipe: Spend the first half of the day reminding Americans that Bush kept his word and accomplished great things. Then spend the afternoon highlighting the President's failures, setbacks, and disappointments—as foisted upon him by Senate Democrats.

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the Medical Economist

Money Mystery at Medicare

By Mark Hemingway

Medicare, which pays health care expenses for elderly Americans, is nearing a breaking point, with spending levels threatening to overwhelm the system sometime in the next two decades. In response to the impending crisis, Congress recently announced a whopping 13.5 percent increase next year in Medicare premiums. And, as part of the new prescription-drug benefit, Congress has decided for the first time to "means test" Medicare programs—requiring wealthier senior citizens to make higher payments.

But further compounding Medicare's looming insolvency is the prescription-drug benefit, which could add $400 billion of costs to the already overloaded program over the next decade. As a result of all this financial pressure, there is suddenly renewed interest among economists in examining the efficiency of Medicare spending.

One of the best indications that there is room for redirecting Medicare spending up or down is the fact that regional spending for Medicare across the country is wildly uneven. For years this has been explained away by localized lifestyle differences. For example, even though Utah and Nevada are adjacent states with similar climates, it doesn't take a doctor or sociologist to notice the glaring differences in lifestyle that account for Nevada's much higher rates of cancer and heart disease—which lead to higher per capita Medicare spending.

But cultural differences can't explain all of the glaring discrepancies in spending. According to a new study by John Wennberg, Elliott Fisher, and Jonathan Skinner of the Dartmouth Medical School, Medicare costs per capita are *two and a half times* as high in Miami as in Minneapolis. Say the researchers: "The difference in lifetime Medicare spending between a typical 65-year-old in Miami and one in Minneapolis is more than $50,000, equivalent to a new Lexus GS 400 with all the trimmings."

There is no difference in the prices of medical services in those two cities. Nor is there any considerable difference in levels of illness to explain such a shocking discrepancy. What *does* account for the higher spending in Miami is the heavier amount of medical services performed.

According to the Dartmouth study, this reflects differences like physicians ordering more tests, more referrals to specialists, more frequent hospitalizations, and longer stays. Discretionary decisions about whether, and how, to pursue these intangible aspects of medical care can make huge differences in total spending.

What's really stirring up controversy about the Dartmouth study, though, is not the glaring inequities in spending. Those have been known for years. The authors of this research go further. They studied health care results, and found that the additional medical care bought with the incrementally higher spending did not improve the quality of care or health outcomes.

With Medicare footing the bill, doctors and patients often opt for more treatment and elective care than they otherwise would. This happens even when more care doesn't lead to better results. "Studies…indicate no net advantage in terms of life expect-ancy for Medicare enrollees living in regions with more hospital resources (and hospitalizations) and greater care intensity as measured by more aggressive treatment patterns during the last six months of life," Wennberg, Fisher, and Skinner report. Nor did Medicare recipients with long-term illnesses such as hip fractures have better outcomes in areas that offered higher levels of medical services, the study found.

When Elliot Fisher appeared at the American Enterprise Institute to discuss his study, health care analyst Gail Wilensky argued that he hadn't paid enough attention to the decisions and demands of individual patients. "You can't talk about market based incentives and only talk about the supply," she suggested.

The vast regional differences in Medicare spending remain something of a mystery. But at least they are now being closely examined. Congress has known about these sharp differences for years, and has continued to fund Medicare without trying to figure out their cause, or whether procedures used in one region could be transferred to another to get good care for less cost.

The Medicare program spends $15 million a year—0.0038 percent of its annual budget—on operations research to unravel puzzles like this and figure out better solutions. With that kind of miniscule investment in improving the efficiency of this troubled program, it's safe to say that no one really knows how much Medicare spending is being wasted. The Dartmouth study is a hint that we need to start finding out.

Mark Hemingway is a writer in Washington, D.C.

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The Eight Myths of Recycling

By Daniel Benjamin

Garbage is the unavoidable by-product of production and consumption. There are three ways to deal with it, all known and used since antiquity: dumping, burning, and recycling. For thousands of years it was commonplace to dump rubbish on site—on the floor, or out the window. Scavenging domestic animals, chiefly pigs and dogs, consumed the edible parts, and poor people salvaged what they could. The rest was covered and built upon.

Eventually, humans began to use more elaborate methods of dealing with their rubbish. The first modern incinerator (called a "destructor") went into operation in Nottingham, England in 1874. After World War II, landfills became the accepted means of dealing with trash. The modern era of the recycling craze can be traced to 1987, when the garbage barge *Mobro 4000* had to spend two months touring the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico before it found a home for its load. The Environmental Defense Fund, the National Solid Waste Management Association (whose members were anxious to line up new customers for their expanding landfill capacity), the press, and finally the Environmental Protection Agency, spun the story of a garbage crisis out of control. By 1995, the majority of Americans thought trash was our number one environmental problem—with 77 percent reporting that increased recycling of household rubbish was the solution. Yet these claims and fears were based on errors and misinformation, which I have compiled into the Eight Great Myths of Recycling.

Myth 1: Our Garbage Will Bury Us

Fact: Even though the United States is larger, more affluent, and producing more garbage, it now has more landfill capacity that ever before. The erroneous opposite impression comes from old studies that counted the number of landfills (which has declined) rather than landfill capacity (which has grown). There are a few places, like New Jersey, where capacity has shrunk. But the uneven distribution of landfill space is no more important than the uneven distribution of automobile manufacturing. Perhaps the most important fact is this: If we permitted our rubbish to grow to the height of New York City's famous Fresh Kills landfill (225 feet), a site only about 10 miles on a side could hold *all of America's garbage for the next century.*

Myth 2: Our Garbage Will Poison Us

Fact: Almost anything can pose a theoretical threat, but evidence of actual harm from landfills is almost non-existent, as the Environmental Protection Agency itself acknowledges. The EPA has concluded that landfills constructed according to agency regulations can be expected to cause a total of 5.7 cancer-related deaths over the next 300 years. It isn't household waste, but improperly or illegally dumped industrial wastes that can be harmful. Household recycling programs have no effect on those wastes, a fact ignored by messianic proponents of recycling.

Myth 3: Our Packaging Is Immoral

Fact: Many people argue that the best way to "save landfill space" is to reduce the amount of packaging Americans use, via mandatory controls. But packaging can actually *reduce* total garbage produced and total resources used. The average American family generates fully one third less trash than does the average Mexican household. The reason is that our intensive use of packaging yields less spoilage and breakage, thereby saving resources, and producing, on balance, less total rubbish. Careful packaging also reduces food poisoning and other health problems.

Over the past 25 years, market incentives have already reduced the weights of individual packages by 30 to 70 percent. An average aluminum can weighed nearly 21 grams in 1972; in 2002, that same can weighs in at under 14 grams. A plastic grocery sack was 2.3 mils thick in 1976; by 2001, it was a mere 0.7 mils.

By contrast, the environmentally sensitive *New York Times* has been growing. A year's worth of the newspaper now weighs 520 pounds and occupies more than 40 cubic feet in a landfill. This is equivalent in weight to 17,180 aluminum cans—nearly a century's worth of beer and soft drink consumption by one person. Clearly, people anxious to heal Mother Earth must forego the *Times*!

Myth 4: We Must Achieve "Trash Independence"

Fact: Garbage has become an interstate business, with 47 states exporting the stuff and 45 importing it. Environmentalists contend that each state should dispose within its borders all the trash produced within its borders. But why?

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Transporting garbage across an arbitrary legal boundary has no effect on the environmental impact of the disposal of that material. Moving a ton of trash is no more hazardous than moving a ton of any other commodity.

Myth 5: We're Squandering Irreplaceable Resources

Fact: Thanks to numerous innovations, we now produce about twice as much output per unit of energy as we did 50 years ago, and five times as much as we did 200 years ago. Automobiles use only half as much metal as in 1970, and one optical fiber carries the same number of calls as 625 copper wires did 20 years ago. Bridges are built with less steel, because steel is stronger and engineering is improved. Automobile and truck engines consume less fuel per unit of work performed, and produce fewer emissions.

To address the issue of paper, the most-promoted form of recycling: The amount of new growth that occurs each year in forests is more than 20 times the number of trees consumed by the world each year for wood and paper. Where loss of forest land is taking place, as in tropical rain forests, it can be traced directly to a lack of private property rights. Governments have used forests, especially the valuable tropical ones, as an easy way to raise quick cash. Wherever private property rights to forests are well-defined and enforced, forests are either stable or growing. More recycling of paper or cardboard would not eliminate tropical forest losses.

Myth 6: Recycling Always Protects the Environment

Fact: Recycling is a manufacturing process, and therefore it too has environmental impact. The U.S. Office of Technology Assessment says that it is "not clear whether secondary manufacturing [i.e., recycling] produces less pollution per ton of material processed than primary manufacturing." Recycling merely changes the nature of pollution—sometimes decreasing it, and sometimes increasing it.

This effect is particularly apparent in the case of curbside recycling, which is mandated or strongly encouraged by governments in many communities around the country. Curbside recycling requires that more trucks be used to collect the same amount of waste materials. Instead of one truck picking up 40 pounds of garbage, one will pick up four pounds of recyclables and a second will collect 36 pounds of rubbish.

Los Angeles has estimated that due to curbside recycling, its fleet of trucks is twice as large as it otherwise would be—800 vs. 400 trucks. This means more iron ore and coal mining, more steel and rubber manufacturing, more petroleum extracted and refined for fuel—and of course all that extra air pollution in the Los Angeles basin as the 400 added trucks cruise the streets.

Myth 7: Recycling Saves Resources

Fact: Using less of one resource usually means using more of another. Curbside recycling is substantially more costly and uses far more resources than a program in which disposal is combined with a voluntary drop-off/buy-back option. The reason: Curbside recycling of household rubbish uses huge amounts of capital and labor per pound of material recycled. Overall, curbside recycling costs between 35 and 55 percent more than simply disposing of the item. It typically *wastes* resources.

In the ordinary course of daily living, we already reuse most higher value items. The only things that intentionally end up in the trash are both low in value and costly to reuse or recycle. Yet these are the items that municipal recycling programs are targeting—the very things that consumers have already decided are too worthless or costly to deal with further. All of the profitable, socially productive opportunities for recycling were long ago co-opted by the private sector, because they pay back. The bulk of all curbside recycling programs simply waste resources.

Myth 8: Without Forced Mandates, There Wouldn't Be Any Recycling

Fact: Long before state or local governments had even contemplated the word recycling, the makers of steel, aluminum, and thousands of other products were recycling manufacturing scraps. Some operated post-consumer drop-off centers.

As for the claim that the private sector promotes premature or excessive disposal, this ignores an enormous body of evidence to the contrary. Firms only survive in the marketplace if they take into account all costs. Fifty years ago, when labor was cheap compared to materials, goods were built to be repaired, so that the expensive materials could be used for a longer period of time. As the price of labor has risen and the cost of materials has fallen, manufacturers have responded by building items to be used until they break, and then discarded. There is no bias against recycling; there is merely a market-driven effort to conserve the most valuable resources.

Informed, voluntary recycling conserves resources and raises our wealth, enabling us to achieve valued ends that would otherwise be impossible. *Mandatory* programs, however, in which people are directly or indirectly compelled to do what they know is not sensible, routinely make society worse off. Such programs force people to squander valuable resources in a quixotic quest to save what they would sensibly discard.

Except in a few rare cases, the free market is eminently capable of providing both disposal and recycling in an amount and mix that creates the greatest wealth for society. This makes possible the widest and most satisfying range of human endeavors. Simply put, market prices are sufficient to induce the trashman to come, and to make his burden bearable, and neither he nor we can hope for any better than that.

Daniel Benjamin is a professor at Clemson University and a senior associate at PERC, the Property and Environment Research Center.

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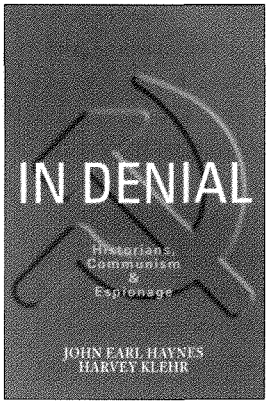
BookTalk

HISTORY THROUGH RED-TINTED GLASSES

By Jamie Glazov

In Denial: Historians, Communism, and Espionage
By John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr
Encounter Books, 280 pages, $25.95



The Left suffered an agonizing defeat when the U.S. won the Cold War in 1991 and the Soviet regime crumbled onto the ash heap of history.

Leftist academics scurried out of the public light to lick their wounds and formulate a strategy to rehabilitate their communist creed. They ultimately decided to go with their favorite tactics: historical amnesia and gulag denial.

In their new book, *In Denial: Historians, Communism, and Espionage*, historians John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr examine this phenomenon, providing a meticulous account of the academic Left's desperate attempt to rewrite history. In their previous two works, *The Secret World of American Communism* and *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America,* Haynes and Klehr used declassified Soviet documents to examine the history of American communism, revealing it to be a pernicious and treacherous force that served the directives of an evil overseas empire.

Now they show how and why the academic establishment has ignored, denied, and distorted the meaning of the evidence they found.

For half a century, leftist academics steadfastly nurtured a mythology of American communism as a noble and progressive movement that could have redeemed America, had it not been for an anti-communist "witch-hunt."

They consistently painted anti-communists who pushed the American Communist Party to the periphery of American politics in the 1950s as villains, and American communist spies as "victims," often even "heroes." Soviet communism and espionage, meanwhile, were portrayed as benign.

Declassified materials, of course, shattered these fantasies. Documents confirmed that American traitors such as Alger Hiss, Julius Rosenberg, Harry Dexter White, and others who betrayed their country were the true villains of the Cold War.

New evidence also legitimized the anti-communist campaign, which is why *In Denial* concludes that, notwithstanding the sins of McCarthyism, anti-communism was "a rational and understandable response to a real danger to American democracy."

To this day, however, American academia refuses to digest the Cold War verdicts. Haynes and Klehr point out that major historical journals, such as the two most prestigious ones, *American Historical Review* and *Journal of American History,* have yet to publish a single article that legitimizes American foreign and domestic anti-communism during the Cold War.

In Denial demonstrates how professors who blamed the U.S. for the Cold War continue to equivocate and obscure the new evidence on Soviet despotism, the guilt of spies, and the intimate espionage links between Moscow and the American Communist Party. The book gives readers specific examples of scholars and academic journals that dismiss the new historical findings with embarrassing unprofessionalism.

We see how academics such as Eric Foner, Joel Kovel, Victor Navasky, and Ellen Schrecker, among many others, blatantly betray the ethics of their own profession by simply denying facts, violating basic standards of assessing new evidence, and engaging in malicious deceit.

We especially witness the tactic of *justification after denial*—whereby leftist scholars defend what they had previously maintained was untrue. For instance, revisionists argued for years that Hiss and the Rosenbergs were innocent. After their guilt was proven beyond reasonable doubt, the revisionists, instead of apologizing, switched their tune and *justified the spying*, arguing that it was a necessary tactic to fight the bad guy in the Cold War: the United States.

This is the same paradigm of Holocaust denial. It has always been evident that those who deny the existence of the Holocaust are the ones who are the most exhilarated by its reality. *In Denial* helps explain the gross double standard that continues to pervade academia: While

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Holocaust deniers are marginalized and forced to the periphery of respectable opinion, gulag deniers receive distinguished positions and are saturated with bountiful material and cultural rewards.

In Denial crystallizes a crucial phenomenon: Apologists for communism never really believed in, or cared about, their own arguments; they were concerned only with crafting lies to camouflage and further their deeper goal—the overthrow of American capitalism.

One result of this is a continuation of the Cold War by other means. By rewriting the past, left-wing academics believe they can program the progressive future, Haynes and Klehr suggest. "Continuing to fight the Cold War in history, they intend to reverse the victory of the West and convince the next generation that the wrong side won, and to prepare the way for a new struggle."

In Denial is a crucial work that sheds vital light on one of the most important political phenomena of the twentieth century: the romance for communism of the West's leftist intellectuals. The book offers a profound contribution to our understanding of why such individuals refuse to acknowledge the dreadful consequences of their own political faith—and how they continue to sacrifice human lives and historical truth on the altar of their misguided ideals.

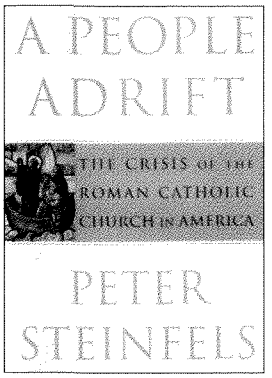
Jamie Glazov is managing editor at Frontpage Magazine. *He is the author of* Canadian Policy Toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union.

CATHOLIC DILEMMAS

By Naomi Schaefer

A People Adrift: The Crisis of the Roman Catholic Church in America
By Peter Steinfels
Simon & Schuster, 416 pages, $26

It's difficult to generalize about a religious group with 65 million adherents, but an outsider might reasonably observe



that American Catholics today are a confused lot. It is perhaps not surprising that there is significant diversity of opinion in such a large population, particularly in one that exists in a liberal democracy. But in his new book, *A People Adrift*, Peter Steinfels argues that it is more than just particular disagreements that plague the American Church today; it is a lack of direction.

The conservative and liberal factions, argues Steinfels, have little to say to each other any more, and the vast majority of Catholics in between have nowhere to turn for guidance. It is this last group with whom he seems most concerned.

Steinfels, who writes the "Beliefs" column for the *New York Times*, and who served for many years as editor of *Commonweal*, provides a useful historical perspective on this breakdown. He notes the significance, for instance, of former New York governor Mario Cuomo's signing legislation to provide public funding for abortions and the subsequent threat of excommunication issued against him by Archbishop John O'Connor.

Cuomo's response, a theological one, that "there is no Church teaching that mandates the best political course for making our belief everyone's rule" shocked American Catholics, who had rarely heard Catholic political leaders publicly challenge the Church hierarchy.

On the flip side of the question of political versus religious loyalty, there was the moment when many Catholics began to rethink their historic affiliation with the Democratic Party. At the 1992 Democratic convention, former Pennsylvania governor Robert Casey was banned from presenting his view opposing the party platform on abortion, despite his support for just about every other Democratic article of faith, and his tremendous popularity.

And, in another historical reality check, Steinfels notes that the recent sex abuse scandals are nothing so new. Most of the priests involved, he maintains, are of an older generation, the majority of the incidents took place decades ago, and many similar charges were made in the early '90s.

Issues such as the sex scandals and the abortion question have woven Catholic controversies right into the fabric of American public debate. And Catholic institutions are now thought of more and more as public institutions, partly because of the large number of non-Catholics who are served by Catholic hospitals and schools, for example.

But if these institutions are, as Steinfels argues, becoming indistinguishable from their secular counterparts, what is their distinct purpose? The answers that many college faculty and hospital administrators offer—usually platitudes about "serving the community"—do not satisfy Steinfels. And rightly so.

Catholic schools do perform a service that secular (or at least public) schools do not. But Steinfels wonders how effective they can continue to be when there are fewer Catholics attending them, fewer Catholics teaching at them, and fewer priests and nuns leading them.

It is, of course, this last factor that will most affect the future of the Church as a whole. And Steinfels does not offer much in the way of hope that the trend of diminishing numbers of people choosing the Catholic religious vocations will change, nor much in the way of solutions beyond the predictable *New York Times*-flavored ones: letting women into the priesthood, allowing priests to marry, and assigning more parish duties to laymen.

Steinfels is at his most original on a subject that may be of little interest to non-Catholics: church services. The quality of the Catholic liturgy and sermons may not be sexy enough to make his paper's front page, but these are vital

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factors in the spiritual and intellectual lives of most Catholics. Or rather, as Steinfels argues, they are *not*.

He quotes one *Commonweal* contributor, who rails that American Catholics have "come to accept lifeless liturgies" and "clueless, noteless sermons that appear to be warmed over term paper memories from a poorly taught New Testament 101 class." Priests are not held accountable for the quality of the homilies they deliver, Steinfels complains.

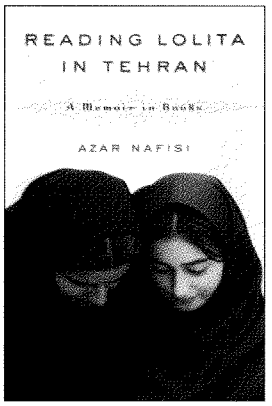
Meanwhile, hymns are often sung by a choir with no participation from the congregants or, where there are no choirs, sung by almost no one. He writes: "Imagine a birthday celebration where two or three out of ten family members actually sang 'Happy Birthday' and the rest stood silent or barely moved their lips. What would be the message?" It's a difficult but fitting image for "a people adrift."

Naomi Schaefer's book on religious colleges will be published in the fall of 2004 by St. Martin's Press.

SURVIVAL LITERATURE

By Juliana Geran Pilon

Reading Lolita in Tehran:
A Memoir in Books
By Azar Nafisi
Random House, 368 pages, $23.95



The first literary genius of the East, spinning her tales a millennium ago, was a clever woman named Sheherezade who defied her king-husband's vow to kill her (as he had her predecessors). By weaving a mix of reality, fiction, and humor into her storytelling, the queen of Persian imagination succeeds not only in postponing her death, but in achieving the immortality of fable and legend.

How ironic that Persia's current regime should consider Sheherezade's life-saving gift, the free imagination, to be its most ferocious enemy. Like all totalitarian regimes, Iran's current government seeks to dictate both behavior and thought.

In her new book, Azar Nafisi perfectly describes her countrymen as having "become the figment of someone else's dream."

A professor of comparative literature, Nafisi resigned from the University of Tehran in 1995 after refusing to dress according to the regulations of the self-styled Islamic regime. She didn't mean to be a hero; but neither would she allow her spirit to be killed by the mindless new kings.

Her superb bestseller, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, which describes the nightmare that has been gripping Iran for much longer than one thousand and one nights, is testimony to that determination. The book is a record of the literary discussions that Nafisi and seven young women held in her home for two years until she left for the United States with her husband and children in 1997. Although her country has yet to emerge from darkness, this book charts the way.

An actor in the drama of her country, a writer of subtle style with universal appeal, Nafisi also describes the lives of others, in the tradition of her medieval predecessor. These are carefully camouflaged for protection, but scrupulously accurate. What unites her protagonists is that they are "a category of victims who have no defense and are never given a chance to articulate their own story."

Nafisi describes the early days of the Iranian revolution, the fanatical regime that seized her country, the eight-year terror of the Iran-Iraq war, and the spectacle of the nation murdering its own children.

In response she turns to Henry James, who wrote despairingly as he watched the German destruction of the Rheims cathedral in 1914, that "We must for dear life make our own counterrealities."

For Nafisi and her students, those counterrealities are works of fiction. Rather than being merely escapist, these works help them understand the complexity of their situation, while simultaneously denouncing its perversion.

How else but through literature could one cope with a brutal regime where girls are killed for "tempting" men by being too beautiful, imprisoned for walking with a man other than a husband or brother, and considered legally marriageable (often to middle-aged satyrs) as early as age nine?

Through the novels they lovingly explore, Nafisi and her pupils discover both empathy and self-respect. It is the lack of empathy that defines—and dooms—the autocrat of any era. Ultimately, no Ayatollah can succeed in destroying Sheherezade's children.

Nafisi has brilliantly, breathtakingly, demonstrated why.

Juliana Geran Pilon teaches political science at St. Mary's College of Maryland.

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Edited by Eli Lehrer

the Digest

Summaries of important new research from the nation's universities, think tanks, and investigative publications

POLITICS

Less Money From Washington

Benjamin Wallace-Wells, "Bush's War on Cops," *Washington Monthly*, September 2003 (washingtonmonthly.com)

Under the Clinton administration, the federal government financially supported local law enforcement at an unprecedented level. More than 70,000 police officers were hired with federal dollars and, perhaps more importantly, the federal government began supporting efforts to upgrade technology and rethink policing strategies. Under President Bush, many of these policies have been reversed. Federal grant funding for local police has fallen significantly. Benjamin Wallace-Wells, an editor of *Washington Monthly*, claims that police agencies like Richmond, Virginia's, which he visited, don't have the resources to carry out the community policing missions they took on during the 1990s.

According to Wallace-Wells, police are also being asked to assume new homeland security duties without the provision of adequate new federal money to aid them. Local police, he argues, can be helpful in the war on terror if federal agencies treat them as full partners. But the Bush administration, he maintains, is simply asking them to do guard work. And there's little hope a better solution will come from the ranks of the Democratic Party. Democrats, Wallace-Wells writes, have plans that appear to have been "expertly focus-grouped with NPR listeners" but offer few operational suggestions on improving police effectiveness.

Hard Left Turn

Zell Miller, *A National Party No More: The Conscience of a Conservative Democrat*, Stroud & Hall, November 2003 (zellmillerbook.com)

In his new book, *A National Party No More: The Conscience of a Conservative Democrat*, Senator Zell Miller (D-GA) explores what he sees as the downfall of his party.

Miller writes that he was disappointed upon arriving in Washington in 2000 not to find the fictional grandeur of Washington depicted in the classic *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. Attending his caucus's weekly lunches, he was deeply angered to see the role money and large special interest groups play in party politics, to the detriment of the needs of American citizens.

Other current Democratic controversies tackled in his book include resistance to the war in Iraq, the loss of Southern support for the Democrats, and the pulling of the party to the far left even as the public gravitates toward the center.

"You might still ask why I would want to take my own party to the woodshed," Miller writes. "The answer is simple: My conscience made me do it."

–Jennifer Brooks

ECONOMICS AND REGULATION

Decaying Economic Orbit?

John Makin, "A Sustainable U.S. Recovery?" *AEI Economic Outlook*, October 2003 (aei.org)

AEI scholar John Makin offers qualified pessimism in his assessment of the prospects for a sustained economic recovery for the U.S. in 2004. "Now, as in the fall of 2001, a disquieting exogenous shock—this time, the Iraqi conflict—has been followed by a large injection of tax cuts and government spending coupled with a highly accommodative Federal Reserve," he writes. These trends, in addition to a mortgage refinancing surge, have significantly buoyed the economy. Right after 9/11, rising stock prices and low interest rates created economic growth that quickly faded once businesses found that they faced large inventories, little pricing power, and rebounding interest rates. They didn't hire new employees, and the economy grew very slowly through 2002.

While the 2003 tax cuts came at an "excellent" time, Congress won't pass further tax cuts anytime soon, and the Fed has little room for additional interest rate cuts. Meanwhile, business capacity utilization remains around 75 percent—well below normal—and businesses are still not hiring. Overseas imports, particularly from China, make it hard for American producers to compete in some markets.

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Household debt, likewise, has begun to grow sharply, thanks to the rise in mortgage debt. A reasonably strong dollar also prevents significant export growth.

Moving the economy from its fall 2003 "liftoff" phase into a phase of sustained growth will require "a sharp inventory drawdown over the balance of this year." This would "produce a sharp jump in output that, in turn, boosts investment and employment."

Stock Exchange Fix

James Glassman, "Reform Requires That Exchanges Completely Separate Regulation from Business, and Adopt a Public-Ownership Model," Testimony before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance, and Government Sponsored Enterprises, October 16, 2003 (thomas.loc.gov)

In the early fall of 2003, the New York Stock Exchange became embroiled in controversy after newspapers reported that outgoing chairman Richard Grasso would receive a payment of nearly $190 million, despite the exchange's lackluster performance. In Congressional testimony, AEI fellow James Glassman, who writes a syndicated column on personal investing, expresses disgust with the NYSE's actions and suggests measures to "help reverse a course that will inevitably lead to more scandals and a further erosion of confidence." Glassman makes two major recommendations.

He proposes separating the regulation and business functions of the stock exchange. Currently, a board of directors which is elected by companies that own exchange seats runs the exchange's business functions and oversees the people who regulate the traders themselves. This produces obvious conflicts of interest. The NYSE imposes very few fines on its members and has a very loose regulatory regime. The regulators (the exchange's top executives) are overpaid to keep them complacent.

Glassman proposes that the NYSE become a publicly traded company controlled by stockholders and run by a board of directors solely concerned with its business operations. (At the moment, it's technically a non-profit company.) An independent regulator—which could be either a government agency or a private company—would then oversee the new agency.

"Separation and public ownership," Glassman says, "are needed to protect the investing public, to provide better service, and…to make exchanges better businesses."

Mortgage Morass

Michael Greve, "Subprime but not Half Bad," *AEI Federalist Outlook*, October 2003 (aei.org)

For an American with a steady job and decent credit history, it's not that hard to obtain a low-rate mortgage and purchase a house. People with spotty employment or checkered credit histories, however, typically get money to buy houses in the subprime market. Here they pay higher interest rates, and sometimes fall victim to confusing, and even fraudulent, terms and penalties.

In the last five years, a coalition of non-profit organizations led by the AARP has begun lobbying legislatures to limit the subprime mortgage market on the basis that it often victimizes minorities. While subprime mortgages allow many people to become homeowners, they are, AEI's Michael Greve concedes, often marred by bizarre rules. These flaws have allowed lobbyists to gain enough traction to pass laws aiming to reign in subprime lenders in a half-dozen states. Some of these laws, such as one passed in Louisiana, outlaw certain practices but allow damaged parties to sue only the local mortgage brokers who made the loan. Other states, such as Georgia, have experimented with regimes that allow consumers to sue anyone who even touched the loan, including the deep-pocket banks that often originate them. This merely resulted in a mass exodus of mortgage lenders from the state.

Congress is now considering two approaches to subprime regulation. One approach, supported by Democrats like Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) and groups like the big-city mayors, would impose very strict federal controls on the subprime mortgage industry, and leave states free to impose further restrictions. Another approach, manifested in Ohio Republican Robert Ney's "Responsible Lending Act" and backed by the banking industry, would impose somewhat less stringent federal regulations, and ban states from creating stricter regulations (a practice called federal preemption).

Greve dislikes both proposals. "The demand for higher federal standards is seriously misguided," he writes. "But so is the industry's demand for federal preemption."

Truly burdensome federal standards, Greve contends, could crush the subprime market and thus leave a significant portion of the population without any access to mortgage credit. Even the more modest federal standards proposed by Ney will backfire in the long run: Activists will ensure that the standards become more stringent than the bill's sponsors intend, and the standards' vagueness will let legislatures and aggressive state attorneys general impose additional restrictions anyway.

The best system, Greve concludes, is the one we have now: letting states write their own rules. Federalism alone can preserve the subprime market because it "permits a whole lot of creative activity in the states, while making it very hard to arrange a national deal that would close the economic frontier before it is settled."

DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Keep WMD Hunt in Balance

John Parachini, "Putting WMD Terrorism into Perspective," *Washington Quarterly*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Autumn 2003 (twq.com)

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Policy makers, scientists, and bureaucrats are now searching for ways to protect the United States from an attack using weapons of mass destruction. These WMD typically include chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons (CBRN). While he doesn't dismiss the threat that al-Qaeda or another terrorist group might use WMDs, John Parachini, an analyst at the RAND Corporation, suggests that the protectors of America's homeland may be expending too many resources in their effort to track such terror weapons. "The historical record," he writes, "cautions against axiomatically suggesting that the al-Qaeda movement or any other terrorist group will inevitably successfully use CBRN weapons in a catastrophic attack against the United States."

He notes that terrorists have used CBRN weapons on only four occasions since the end of World War II, and none of these four attacks were wholly successful. Fighting weapons of mass destruction, Parachini suggests, should be only one part of the nation's anti-terrorism strategy. An overbearing focus on WMD might draw "scarce resources away from basic but essential activities of law enforcement, intelligence, border and customs control, diplomacy, and military action."

OTHER COUNTRIES

Europe's Weak Constitution

Jack Rakove, "Europe's Foundering Fathers," in *Foreign Policy*, September/October 2003 (foreignpolicy.com)

Between February of 2002 and June of 2003, 105 delegates met in Brussels to write a constitution for the European Union. Jack Rakove, a professor at Stanford University, isn't impressed with either the outcome or the process, particularly compared to the Philadelphia convention that created the U.S. Constitution of 1787. For all the attention the new constitution has drawn in Europe, Rakove believes that "the drafting, renegotiating, and finally approving of the finished constitution" is not likely "to produce anything like the clear and unequivocal decision that emerged" from Philadelphia.

The constitution the E.U. will likely adopt offers both more and less than its American predecessor. It offers more in that it includes a long list of rights to social benefits such as education, health, and job training, though Rakove describes these promises as "dangerously vague." The E.U. government, unlike its American counterpart, has few limits on those powers.

The proposed European constitution also offers much less than the American in certain categories: less democratic accountability (most nations will not even hold referenda on the constitution), and less sovereignty. For example, the E.U. will not have the power to conduct a unified foreign policy, directly tax its citizens, or raise a military.

The development of the E.U. as a superstate, Rakove concludes, will likely happen in an incremental fashion. Part of this may occur as judges choose to read the constitution in an expansive fashion to push the process along.

The constitution will probably not have much of a foreign policy effect in the near future. So the deep, underlying differences between the E.U. and U.S. will be addressed in other ways.

SOCIETY

The Real Cyber Threats

William Webb and Eli Lehrer, "Securing Cyberspace," in *American Outlook*, December 2003 (americanoutlook.org)

Americans depend on computers for everything from air traffic control to Christmas shopping. Nearly everyone who studies the matter agrees that a terrorist attack that involved computer systems could wreak havoc on vital transportation and communication networks that keep American society humming.

William Webb, a homeland security consultant, and *TAE* associate editor Eli Lehrer offer a mix of good news and strong cautions when it comes to America's cyber threats. On one hand, the two argue that "doomsday scenarios are hugely improbable": terrorists probably won't be able to launch nuclear missiles, crash airplanes, or cause nuclear reactors to melt down using cyber attacks. On the other, they warn of three main threats that involve cyberspace:

- Attacks on the Internet's physical infrastructure: Key servers and fiber-optic backbones are still relatively insecure; terrorists could cause massive disruptions with a coordinated attack.
- An assault on commercial targets: While vital military targets often have full-scale backup systems, most major commercial enterprises rely on backup centers run by major computer service providers like IBM. It's unclear, however, if there's enough capacity to withstand a truly massive attack.
- Forgery of electronic credentials: Validating documents ranging from drivers' licenses to cargo manifests requires access to computer systems. If terrorists could compromise these systems, they might be able to, for instance, create shipping records showing a nuclear bomb was a box of blue jeans.

To solve these problems, Webb and Lehrer recommend a grab bag of solutions, including better physical security (run by the federal government) around Internet infrastructure, tax credits for corporations that build better backup capacity, and an aggressive strategy of attacking the servers, Web sites, and chat rooms that terrorists use. But none of this, they write, is a substitute for military action. "Total victory will come," they conclude, "only when terrorists and those who support them no longer have any place to hide."

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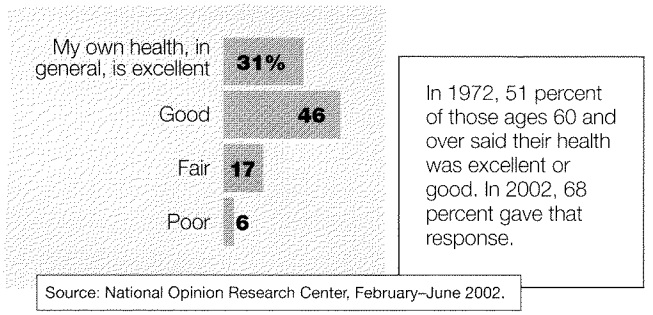
Opinion Pulse

Edited by Karlyn Bowman

Health

Most Americans say they are healthy. The progress the nation has made can be seen by looking at the responses older people have given to that question over time. Still, 50 percent say that they or someone in their family is overweight. The proportion of Americans with health insurance coverage hovers around 80 percent in most surveys. The responses to a Harris question reveal the political sensitivity of health care. More people prefer to keep current health benefits than to get a pay raise with reduced benefits. Most people say they are satisfied with the quality of their care and their ability to get appointments and see specialists. People are less happy with costs, but here, too, 59 percent report satisfaction.

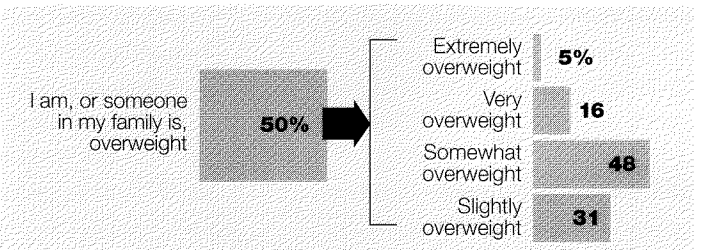
Question: Would you say...?



In 1972, 51 percent of those ages 60 and over said their health was excellent or good. In 2002, 68 percent gave that response.

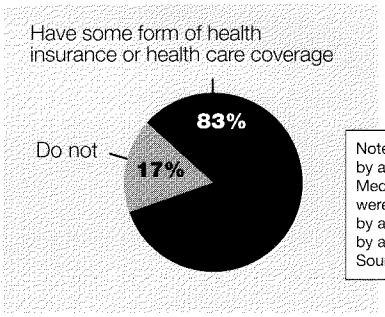
Source: National Opinion Research Center, February–June 2002.

Question: Are you...?



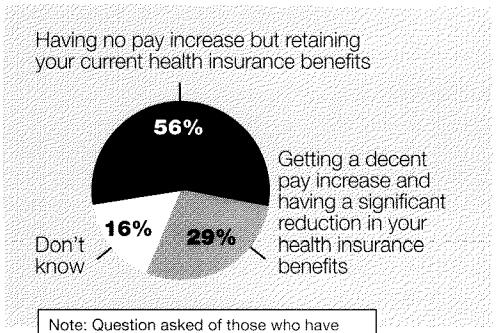
Note: Sample is families.
Source: The Gallup Organization for *Reader's Digest*, April–May 2003.

Question: Do you...?



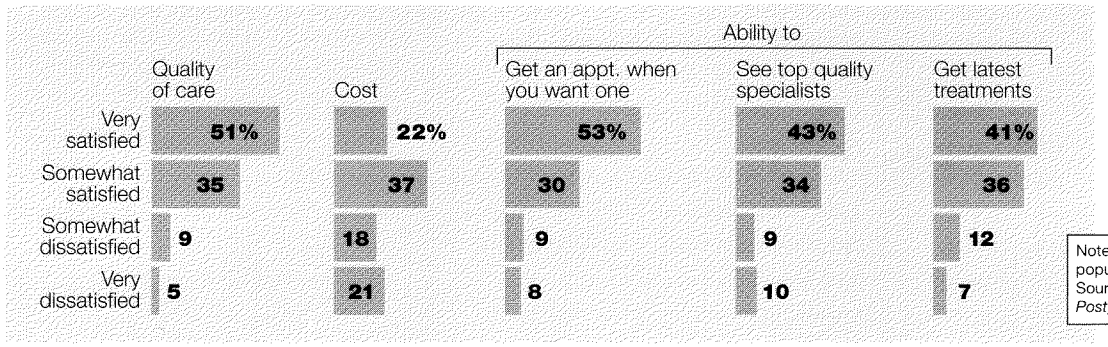
Note: Sixty percent of Americans in this survey were covered by a private plan, 15 percent by Medicare, and 4 percent by Medicaid. Of those covered by private plans, 23 percent were covered by a traditional fee-for-service plan, 42 percent by a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO), and 33 percent by a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO).
Source: ABC News/*Washington Post*, October 2003.

Question: If you were faced with a choice, which one of the following would you choose?



Note: Question asked of those who have employer-provided health care.
Source: Harris Interactive, September 2003.

Question: For each specific item I name, please tell me whether you are...?



Note: Sample is the general population.
Source: ABC News/*Washington Post*, October 2003.

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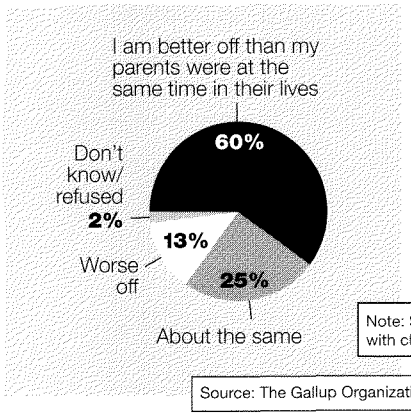
Wealth

Sixty percent of Americans say they are better off than their parents were at the same point in their lives, and about two thirds expect their children to be better off than they are. Seventy percent say it is still possible to start out poor, work hard, and become rich in America. About 30 percent of Americans, including 51 percent of 18- to 29- year olds, say it is likely that they will become rich. What constitutes being rich today? The median response is $120,000 per year. The number of people with investments has been growing.

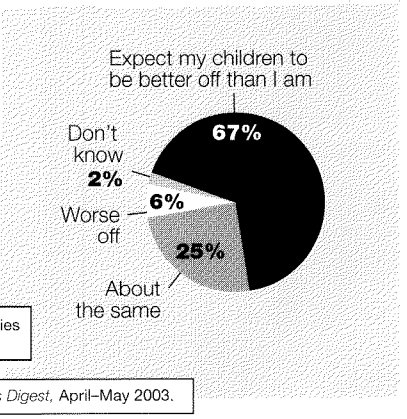
Question: Looking at your overall financial situation, would you say you are…?



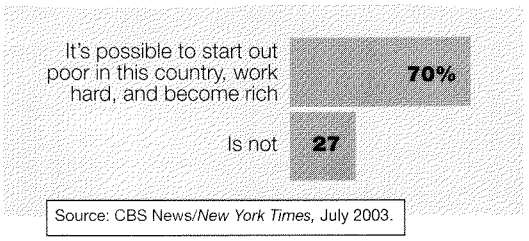
Note: Sample is families with children.

Source: The Gallup Organization for *Reader's Digest*, April–May 2003.

Question: How do you think your children will do, compared to your financial situation? Do you…?

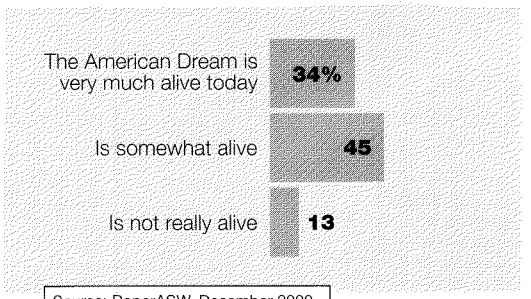


Question: Do you think…?



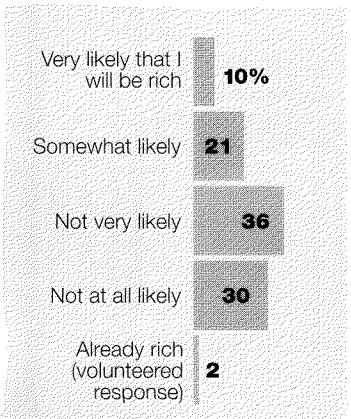
Source: CBS News/*New York Times*, July 2003.

Question: I'd like to talk with you now about a term with which you are probably familiar—the American Dream. Do you personally feel…?



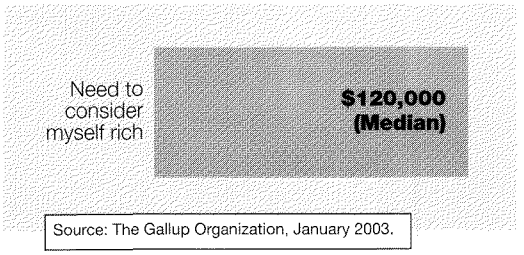
Source: RoperASW, December 2000.

Question: Looking ahead, how likely is it that you will ever be rich? Would you say it is…?



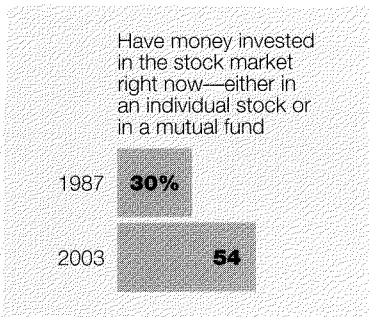
Source: The Gallup Organization, January 2003.

Question: Just thinking about your own situation, how much money per year would you…?



Source: The Gallup Organization, January 2003.

Question: Do you personally, or jointly with a spouse, have any…?



Source: CBS News/*New York Times*, latest that of October 2003.

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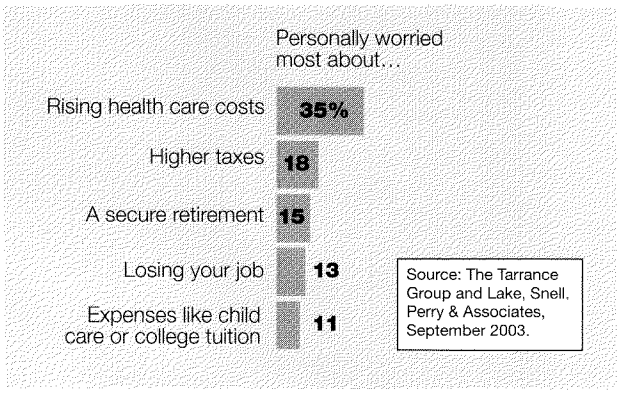
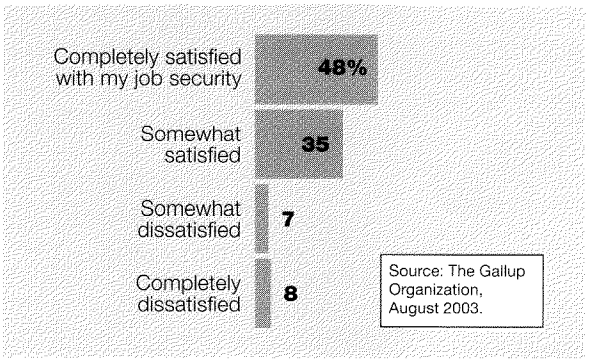
Security

What worries Americans? Thirty-five percent cite rising health care costs. About 15 percent say they are worried about their own job security, although many more are worried about the job market in the nation. Thirty-six percent say they are worried about walking in their neighborhood after dark. About a quarter worry that they or someone in their family could become a victim of a terrorist attack. Most people are confident about their retirement security, although only a quarter expect to get what they think is owed to them from Social Security. More people today expect private savings to be a major source of their retirement income than expect Social Security to be.

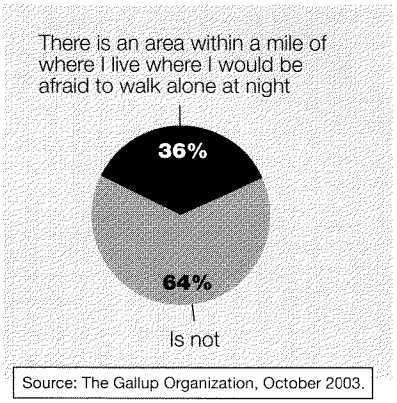
Question: Thinking specifically about the economy, what are you...?



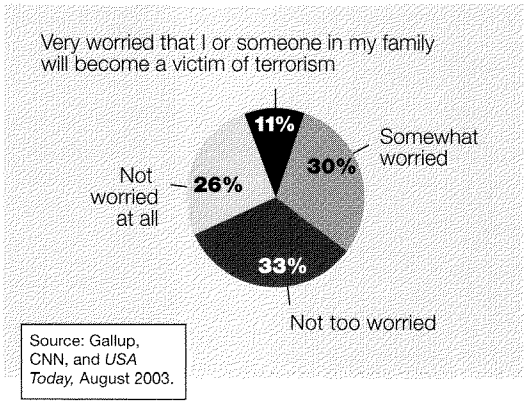
Question: Now I'll read a list of job characteristics. For each one, please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with your current job in this regard. First, are you...?



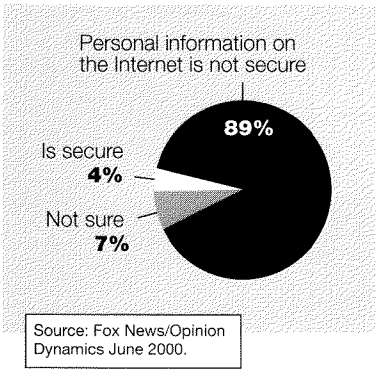
Question: Is there any area where you live...?



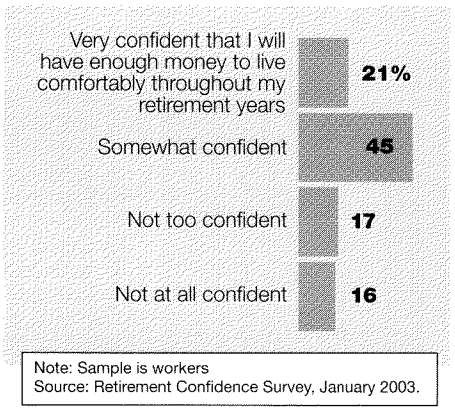
Question: How worried are you that...?



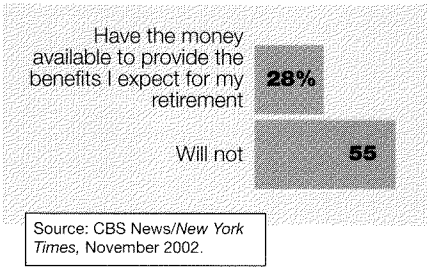
Question: Do you think...?



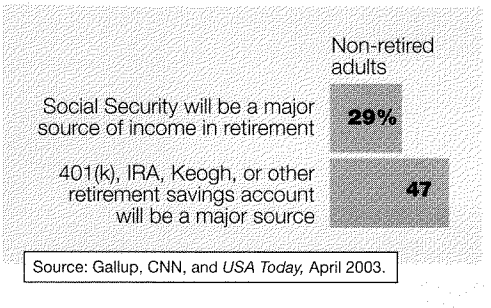
Question: Overall, how confident are you...?



Question: Do you think the Social Security system will...?



Question: When you retire, how much do you expect to rely on each of the following sources of money...?



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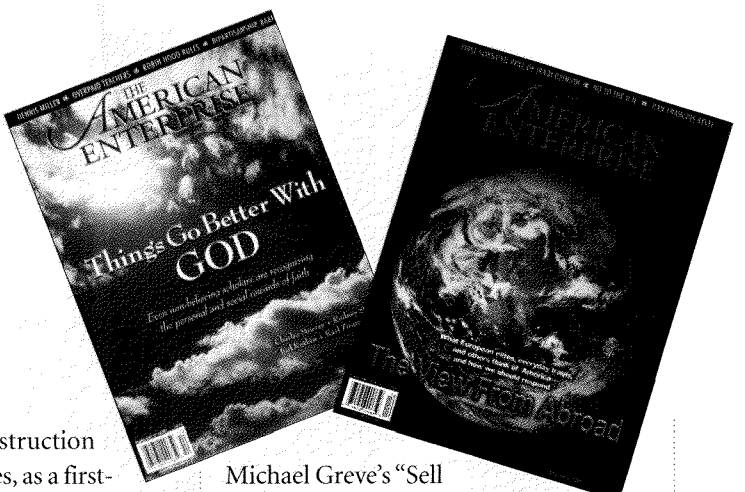
the Mail



Jean-Francois Revel's "Europe's Anti-American Obsession" (December) is the best explanation of anti-Americanism I have read. And while he details foreign criticism so well, the saddest observation he makes is that "anti-Americanism continues to prosper among university, journalistic, and literary elites" in America as well.

Anti-Americans inside and outside the United States depend on the political and social ignorance of their citizens. Revel provides ample proof that people are prejudiced against us because they do not know much about us.

I am not sure of the truth of Revel's final statement that animosity strengthens us though I would like to think adversity makes us stronger.

Sam Grubbs
Wolfe City, Texas

Your issue "The View from Abroad" (December), contained a fascinating analysis of "the deepest anti-Americanism," which Karl Zinsmeister summarizes is "built on ideological bile and envy" (BIRD'S EYE, "New Friends For Old").

There is another way to explain this anti-Americanism. Philosopher and novelist Ayn Rand observed that people were either "first-handers" or "second-handers."

First-handers base their thoughts, actions, and self-esteem on the facts that are processed through their own reasoning mind. Second-handers seek facts and self-esteem from and through others.

So it is with nations. France and company are second-handers with nothing but impediment and obstruction to offer. The United States, as a first-hander, has created a country with the most freedom, the most creativity, and the most can-do people on the face of the earth. No amount of envy can obfuscate this fact.

Margaret Sanchez
Kalamazoo, Michigan

In an otherwise excellent issue, David Gutmann's psychobabble, "The Power of Shame" (December), adds nothing useful to the discussion of world politics.

Everyone knows the Muslim world is tormented by the results of its historical departure from progress and reason. But the wild assertion that all human societies can be divided into those governed by shame and those governed by guilt is what we psychologists call "pschopathologizing," here elevated to its most grandiose level.

Can we really believe the whole planet and every culture in it are governed by one of these two sick purposes? The bifurcation is absurd. Post World War II Germany was plagued by guilt *and* shame, probably in equal measure, but it was governed by more pressing concerns than either of these emotions. It's insulting to read that our own country is driven by guilt, rather than the positive principles we all celebrate.

Ivory tower psychologists should stick with running rats through mazes if they can't keep from mocking the discipline they claim to represent.

Mark Vlosky, Ph.D.
Broomfield, Colorado

Michael Greve's "Sell Globally, Tax Locally" (ENTERPRISING, December), is dead-on in calling for Congress to tread lightly in taxing the Internet. It's no coincidence that the Internet revolution really began after the Internet Tax Freedom Act of 1998, which prohibits taxes that would discourage the public's use of the medium.

The Internet is one of the most innovative markets ever created because it allows near-total freedom of access for both producers and consumers on a global level. But it's still in a state of relative infancy; we're only just beginning to understand its potential. And whether we're talking about a product, a technology, or a marketplace, the surest way to stifle potential is to tax it.

Blake Dvorak
Consumers' Research
Washington, D.C.

After reading Fred Gedrich's "No U.N. in Iraq" (December), I can't help but wonder how much longer we are going to provide finances and serve as host to the fraudulent organization that is the U.N. It is time that we propose a wholesale reorganization of the U.N., or give notice of our withdrawal.

In the meantime, we should begin to explore with other free nations the possibility of setting up a new worldwide organization with membership open only to nations that believe in and practice individual freedom.

C. H. Fields
Spencer, West Virginia

The American Enterprise welcomes your comments. Send e-mail to TAE@aei.org. Or write "The Mail," The American Enterprise, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Or fax (202) 862-5867. Please include your address and phone number. Published letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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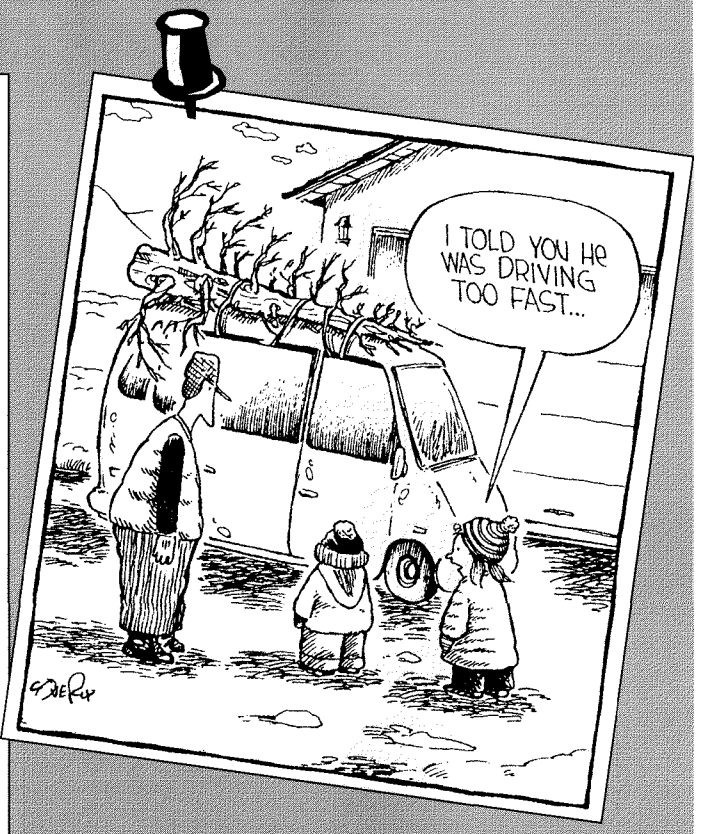
"And now, if you'll all turn to page 634, Section P, of your convention agenda..."



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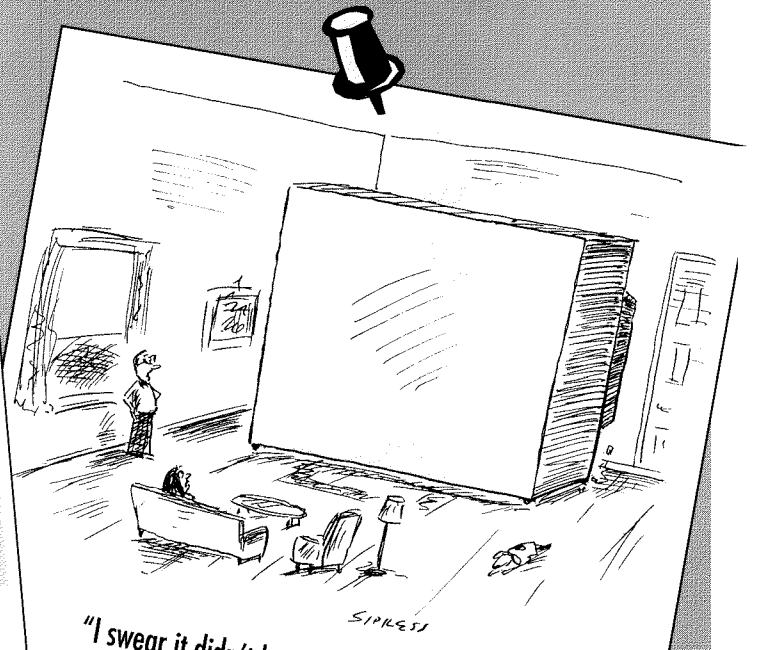
"I really took my divorce, bankruptcy, and federal indictment as a kind of wake-up call."



"I swear it didn't look that big in the store."

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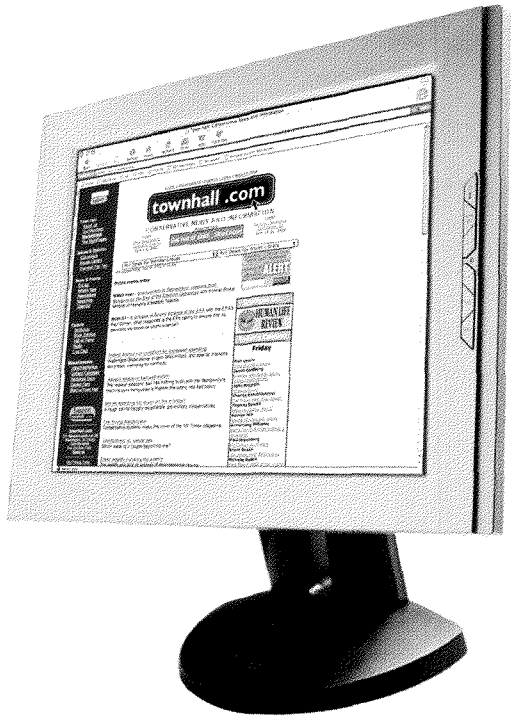
2,000,000 readers. 105 groups. 66 columnists.



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IF IT'S IMPORTANT, IT'S ON . . .

Think TANK

With BEN WATTENBERG

"You cannot imagine how you enrich my life. I look forward to THINK TANK every day, sometimes twice a day.

My wife and I watch your Saturday morning THINK TANK show whenever we can and enjoy it very much. After listening to your conversation with Margaret Macmillan about "Paris 1919," we got her book, and are reading it now. Thanks for introducing us to such a fascinating topic.

My words could not express my gratitude, as a poor self-educated male, to have intellectual discourse accessible. I often wonder if PBS could possibly know all the impoverished whose lives are forever changed in subtle ways by the intellectual and artistic format of their programming. I just wanted to e-mail you with my heart-felt appreciation of your show.

I've just seen your show for the first time and loved it.

THINK TANK is the best Sunday evening show on TV in the Chicago area.

We first discovered your show about a month ago, and have been enjoying it thoroughly ever since.

In our opinion, THINK TANK is one of the very best shows on television.

I would like you to know that I am really enjoying the show. You are helping me to piece this crazy quilt world of ours together."

Our only response is "thank you"!

PBS

THINK TANK: THE PBS PROGRAM ON IDEAS

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